Bogus Reform of Campaign Funding *Walter Pincus*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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A Journal of Politics and the Arts — December 11, 1971, 50 cents

The Non-Answer To Nixonomics

Melville J. Ulmer on the Default of the Democrats

Reed Whittemore on Cole Porter

Peter Barnes on Henry George

Robert Shayon on Nicholas Johnson

John Osborne on Nixon's Travels

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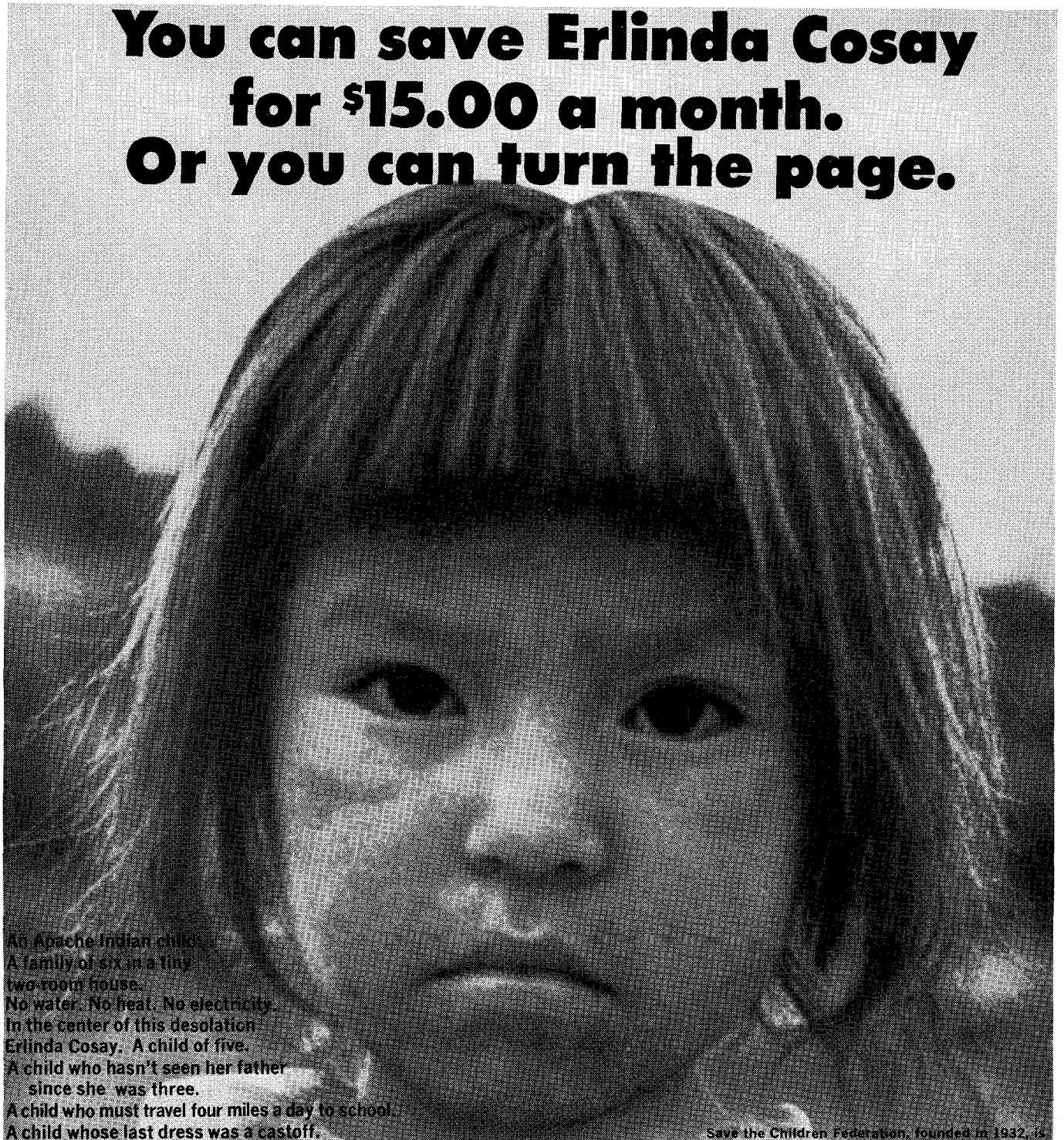
You can save Erlinda Cosay for $15.00 a month. Or you can turn the page.



An Apache Indian child.
A family of six in a tiny two room house.
No water. No heat. No electricity.
In the center of this desolation Erlinda Cosay. A child of five.
A child who hasn't seen her father since she was three.
A child who must travel four miles a day to school.
A child whose last dress was a castoff.
Erlinda needs your help so she can help herself.
And through Save the Children Federation you can give her that help.
For $15.00 a month you can sponsor an American Indian child like Erlinda.
So that there can be electricity in the house instead of kerosene and wood.
So Erlinda can have a new dress. And books.
So Erlinda's neighbors can improve their village. With a community well. A new road. Perhaps a laundromat. To make money to buy necessities to make dependent people independent.
And for you there's even more. The chance to correspond with a child. To receive a photograph. And progress reports.
That's how Save the Children works. But without you it can't work. Please. Clip this coupon and mail it today. Now you can turn the page.

Save the Children Federation, founded in 1932, is registered with the U.S. State Department Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid. Contributions are income tax deductible.

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☐ Appalachia
☐ Africa
☐ Europe
☐ Latin America
☐ Vietnam
☐ India
☐ Middle East
☐ Korea
☐ Southern U.S.

Enclosed is my first payment

☐ $15.00 monthly
☐ $45.00 quarterly
☐ $90.00 semi-annually
☐ $180.00 annually

☐ Instead, enclosed is my contribution of $ _____
☐ Please send me more information.

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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NR 12/11/1

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Seven million East Pakistanis are wet, cold, homeless and dying right now.

If you're about to say "It's not my problem" we can well understand why.

Americans normally would never ignore a desperate plea for help. But that's exactly what we're doing to East Pakistan's refugees. For some perfectly understandable reasons.

Giving has become compulsory and computerized.

It's no longer the involving thing it used to be. In 1776, we took care of each other because we *wanted* to. During the Depression, the family table was shared with strangers. Through World War II, we helped brave Britons we'd never seen but cared about, nonetheless. The American Indians have always taken care of each other because they've wanted to. And many of our young people are starting a new life-cycle of person-to-person giving through communal living.

Where does that leave the rest of us? In the middle of mass-produced, impersonal, *involuntary* giving. We have no choice about where our tax money goes, and aren't at all certain whether it's solving urgent problems for someone deserving or getting into the hands of someone who isn't. We read about the billions of dollars that go to foreign aid and welfare, but people can't think in billions. Then we read about corruption and inefficiency as to where our money goes, and we're convinced the billions have been blown. Because we have so little say these days in how best to help people, we take very little pleasure in giving help.

We've lost the ability to be shocked by man's inhumanity to man.

Disaster and violence are everyday fare. When six million Jews were exterminated, we were stunned. We've watched thousands die on telecasts from Indo-China and we've been stunned. In the last 30 years alone, we've been besieged with on-the-spot reports of pestilence, firing squads, famine, earthquakes, every kind of slaughter that can hit a human life. Now, another horror story is unfolding—of abject poverty, agony and an urgent fight for more than seven million lives. It's as hideous a disaster as the world has ever known. But we're not responding. Maybe we've been stunned into unconsciousness.

We have our own problems.

Going out of the house is asking for a mugging or at least a lungful of cancerous pollution. Sending our kids to school is like sending them to the corner pusher. We're killing nature, but we can't afford vacations anyway. We're in a last-ditch effort to take care of our own. We haven't much room left for concern for one more starving, cholera ridden, flea bitten orphan photographed in East Pakistan or anywhere else.

Those are the reasons not to help. But we hope you'll help anyway—because you want to. It's as simple as people taking care of people.

Last November, a cyclone and flood killed half a million of these people. In March, a man-made flood began. A flood of people by the millions forced to leave their homes and face possible death—or to stay and face certain death. 100,000 a day are still making the decision.

A father is right now trying to find a scrap of rice on the ground to get his child through one more miserable day. A mother is taking the rags off her back in a feeble attempt to keep her baby dry during the monsoons. A child is too weak to cry anymore. If one of us helps, one of them suffers less.

What you give goes directly to the disaster area, where money is worth more.

Without your help, the Indian government has done a remarkable job of maintaining stability in the midst of horror. With your help, it can work more wonders. Oxfam-America funds for East Pakistan refugees are directed two ways. First, to India's Ministry of Rehabilitation. Second, through Oxfam field directors who route the money locally, where supplies cost far less than if we shipped them from here. Over 30 years in international development, including many years in India and Pakistan, Oxfam has built a strong corps of Indian volunteers—and has a keen eye for which local agencies can best serve the most people.

We're using the money first for medicine and field hospitals to fight the ravages of cholera, pneumonia, dysentery, conjunctivitis, typhoid and typhus.

Second, for food such as chicken soup powder, milk powder and vitamins to combat malnutrition.

Third, for corrugated plastic sheeting for shelters, plus mats and blankets we hope will last through the monsoons.

Fourth, for basic clothing. As the women share their last rags with their children, their half-naked bodies become an unthinkable disgrace to a proud people.

What can't be bought locally must be transported. Another need for money.

We're using the money efficiently, because we can't afford not to. The lives involved can't wait.

One more way to give: Share this ad.

Give our message to your church, your company, your clubs, your friends. Perhaps they'll give—because they want to.

AMERICANS FOR EAST PAKISTAN REFUGEES
OXFAM-AMERICA FUND
120 East 32nd Street, Box D.J., New York, N.Y. 10016
Telephone: 212/684-4302

Enclosed is my gift of $_____

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Make checks payable to OXFAM-AMERICA Inc.
ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

Oxfam-America derives its name, spirit and beginnings from the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, founded in 1942 in England to help the refugees of Europe.

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TRB

from Washington ®

Brass Tax

Next month Mr. Nixon will send Congress a budget with a really horrendous deficit and the sad thing is that it will postpone the most important domestic business of the United States, a rectification of the terrible imbalance between what the nation spends for private goods (movies, fur coats and chewing gum) and what it spends for public goods (schools, street lamps and garbage removal).

The deficit may run from $30 to $35 billion and perhaps higher, and we don't envy the speech writer who tries to clothe the disaster in grandiloquent rhetoric as Mr. Nixon managed to do for his deficit in January a year ago. But we don't doubt he will rise to it. We have just looked through that message and it was a beaut. The year before he still clung to the conventional Hoover-Eisenhower theory: "We must balance our Federal budget so that American families will have a better chance to balance their family budgets," but he dropped that lofty banality in January, 1971 when his hoped-for $1.2-billion surplus turned into $11.6-billion of red ink. He adopted the sensible idea of an incentive, or full-employment, budget instead. This simply meant that he accepted a certain amount of red ink for the time being until the economy got back into whack. Everybody breathed better, but the President couldn't avoid clothing the bad news in a glowing message that outlined "the new American Revolution."

"This can be a revolution," he said, "as profound, as farreaching, as exciting, as that first revolution almost 200 years ago."

Except for the hyperbole of the thing (which even now tends to set our teeth on edge), we don't mean to poke fun at Mr. Nixon; Democratic Presidents have made budget miscalculations, too; indeed budget-writing is an art form that becomes more and more like a fairy tale, and George Schultz, the mild-mannered man who puts it into statistics, is Hans Christian Anderson. The budget, you see, is telling us what we are going to be doing 18 months away, in the next fiscal year (we're now in FY 1972 that ends next July 30), and nobody can do that. Yet, the dull budget is the wish, the prayer, the poem, by which we set out our national priorities. For Mr. Nixon, alas, it's always been a clinker.

Now there's a confrontation between the President and Congress over the new tax bill and the attention of most people, naturally enough, is on whether or not it will carry federal aid for campaign expenditures. Involved, also, are some of the most lavish tax bonanzas to business which any recent administration has given. The White House says these are okay but it threatens to veto the bill if Congress persists in including a lot of additional tax cuts to consumers, plus the campaign-financing rider. He's thinking, of course, of next January's budget.

The dirty little secret in Washington which everybody knows but about which there's a conspiracy by politicians and press not to discuss, is that the USA sooner or later must have more taxes, not less. A temporary tax cut is all right as a stimulus to recovery in time of recession as now, and that's what Mr. Nixon and Congress both want and which most experts approve. But the business tax cuts which Mr. Nixon proposes (and which the Democratic Congress generally approves) are not temporary, but permanent. They represent a trend: to transfer more taxes from corporations to individuals. They are deliberate policy of the Nixon administration set out by the "Task force of Business Taxation" which was headed by John H. Alexander (the tax man of the Nixon-Mitchell New York law firm), which started its work in September, 1969. These tax cuts for corporations will be politically terribly hard to restore when the time comes to start spending money again for social amelioration. The administration is also edging toward a national sales (value-added) tax.

In fiscal 1966 the biggest federal tax source was personal income tax; the second, corporate income tax; the third, social security. By fiscal 1971 (that ended last June 30) corporate taxes had slipped to third place. They will drop more under the new tax bill. Are we phasing out the corporate income tax? Tom Field, executive director of "Taxation With Representation," a public interest tax lobby, thinks so.

Take a couple of examples from the proposed new tax bill (currently deadlocked). Take a thing called depreciation allowance. As tools and buildings wear out, government taxes them less. It has a "useful life" formula. The new tax bill provides a new formula; it is called "Adjusted Depreciation Range" (ADR) and it sets useful life about 20 percent shorter. That means a fine fat cut in taxes.

It is terribly difficult to explain these complicated things. A Washington reporter uses up his 800 words just trying to define the terms knowing that readers will yawn after the first sentence. But the fact is that this change in the rules gives a bonus to corporations of $3 to $6 billion a year, or $40 billion over the next decade, plus $4 billion a year thereafter into the indefinite future.

Senator Birch Bayh (D, Ind.) fought the change and almost beat it, too; the final Senate vote was a cliff-hanger, 40-39. The money must be raised somewhere else. You lost; the corporations won.

Or take a thing called DISC. That's an acronym for Domestic International Sales Corporation. It's easy to explain. Suppose you live in a state with a big sales tax, so you go to another state without a sales tax and order your goods there and have them sent to you. You duck the tax. Now suppose you are a US corporation selling goods abroad; on every $1 in profit you have to pay 40 cents in US corporate income tax. The new tax law provides a neat little exemption: it will allow the parent company to set up a subsidiary for foreign sales, a DISC, and this pays no corporate income tax if its profit is kept in the subsidiary. Cute, eh? Maybe this will stimulate US sales abroad; it also abandons a profitable tax source. There are a lot of others.

The unpalatable fact is that the gap between rich and poor in the US isn't lessening; that our disgraceful tax structure is probably less progressive, less fair than a decade ago; and that the boiling demand for increased social services (more police, more health care, better environment) is running short of funds. You would think some presidential candidate would take this as an issue. George Wallace has; he says he will stump on it next year. Anyone else?

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Paying for Good Schools

Public schools across the country are slipping into bankruptcy. Dayton, Ohio schools have already closed, and Chicago faces closure for the month of December. Schools have been shut down temporarily or are near it in Independence and Kansas City, Missouri; in Louisville, Portland and Philadelphia. In Gary, Ind., teachers decided to work for two weeks last month without pay checks. In California, although deficit financing is prohibited by the state constitution, several major school districts are operating in the red this year. A National Education Association survey taken in September of the nation's 103 largest school districts, found that 41 were facing some kind of financial crisis; five planned to close temporarily, three planned to shorten the school day, 22 were holding larger classes, and 27 were cutting back on "luxury" courses such as art, music, drama and physical ed.

Not all the alarms are false. Increases in operating revenues have not kept pace with rising costs, and the power of school boards and committees to coax additional taxes out of their communities appears to be evaporating. Not long ago, a well managed campaign could assure voter endorsement of school tax increases, bond issues and tax overrides. Now ballot proposals to increase school outlays are routinely defeated – three times last year in Dayton. Similarly, requests to state legislatures are being refused. In an industry as gargantuan as public education, one would expect there to be reliable, up-to-date information on school closures and financial problems. There is not. The US Office of Education has no current figures on how many schools have shut down in the past six months, nor does the National Center for Educational Statistics. All they know is what everybody knows: schools are in trouble.

The most fashionable explanation for the trouble is that a taxpayers' revolt is underway, that an already overburdened middle class and working class will no longer stand for open-ended government expenditure. The explanation is inadequate. A cursory analysis of California school revenue elections shows that the traditional pattern of support and opposition to school funding is intact: parents of school-age children favor increased outlays; nonparents do not. In California, at least, this division cuts across religious lines, with Catholic parents supporting money for public schools in the same proportion as their Protestant and Jewish neighbors. Those with the

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most to gain from good schools – the black and poor – endorse increases overwhelmingly.

The taxpayer revolt theory is attractive because schools are one thing about which voters are occasionally able to express themselves directly. How would social welfare programs, or defense expenditures fare if they faced public referendums? On this theory, outraged taxpayers are simply addressing themselves to the most visible target: the schools bear the brunt of public frustration. It is equally reasonable to believe, however, that the public – and thus the legislatures – are tightening the purse strings because the schools are no longer credible, are not doing their job well, and therefore don't deserve further support. Legislators who voted more money five or ten years ago are still waiting for the good education it promised and didn't deliver, so why throw good money after bad. A crisis of confidence has developed that is potentially catastrophic.

There is one new element, and that is a California Supreme Court decision on August 30, 1971. In *Serrano vs. Priest*, the court ruled that California's system of school financing was unconstitutional because it made educational expenditure a function of school district wealth. This served no valid public purpose, it said, and could not withstand challenge under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. The court's basic point was that Watts, or a rural Mexican-American barrio, should have the same capacity as wealthier Beverly Hills or Palo Alto to raise funds for education. Since many lily-white bedroom communities have low-assessed property valuations, they stand to gain as much from *Serrano* as poor black and Chicano communities, raising the prospect of a unique alliance between middle-class white suburbanites and the inner-city and rural poor.

"Maybe we can requisition it for missile storage."

Although procedural issues and appeals may keep *Serrano* in suspension for months or even years (and the Nixon Supreme Court may eventually reverse it on appeal), it is already having an effect in other states. A Minnesota federal court recently issued a finding nearly identical to *Serrano*, and numerous *Serrano*-type suits are being filed elsewhere. In California, the legislature has taken the *Serrano* decision with great seriousness. Both houses of the legislature have initiated comprehensive studies of alternate methods of school finance, and major legislation to revise school financing will be introduced this spring.

The key, however, is not in new methods of financing, but in a determination to couple school tax reform with major educational innovation. In that connection, we should note our rare agreement with Governor Reagan. A bill he supported, and which was just defeated in its final committee hearing in California, would have permitted a school district to contract with the US Office of Economic Opportunity to undertake a carefully controlled tuition voucher pilot project. We reported on this proposal in Christopher Jencks' article, "Education Vouchers" in our issue of July 4, 1970. The experimental plan Jencks described, and which he largely authored, would provide parents with vouchers to cover the cost of educating their children at the school of their choice. It was supported in California by a bipartisan coalition of liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans in both houses of the legislature. Its purpose was to improve elementary education by making schools more responsive to the needs and desires of the families they serve. The bill contained tough civil rights provisions and prohibited discrimination against the poor. It also required comprehensive, independent evaluation of the program it authorized. On balance, it represented a novel but fair approach to a controversial subject. On the other side of the country, in Washington, DC, a community-controlled school project has been told by the US Office of Education not to expect any further funding. Most of the children affected are black. Nearly $6 million has been spent, and the entire experiment is scheduled for dismantling.

Although we have reservations about the ability of a voucher system, or community control, or open classrooms, or educational parks – or any single innovation for that matter – to materially improve the public schools, the voucher idea and others like it deserve more consideration than they are getting.

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Living on the Land

"Real estate is an enterprise in 'futures,'" Thorstein Veblen wrote in *Absentee Ownership*, "designed to get something for nothing from the unwary." One of the more enterprising ways in which absentee landowners have profited at the expense of unwary taxpayers has been through ownership of large acreages in federal reclamation areas. The scheme is simple: buy worthless land in an arid region, or in an area where the water supply is erratic, and then persuade the government to build dams and pumping stations and aqueducts that will turn the land into a valuable oasis.

This is approximately what has happened in California's torrid Imperial Valley, as Peter Barnes pointed out in "Water, Water for the Wealthy" (*NR*, May 8, 1971), despite the provisions in the 1902 Reclamation Act that make it illegal for a single landholder to receive federal water for more than 160 acres, or for anyone but "an actual bona fide resident" or occupant "residing in the neighborhood" of this farm to receive any federal water at all. Earlier this year the Nixon administration let stand a federal district judge's ruling that the Imperial Valley was miraculously exempt from the 160-acre limitation. Solicitor General Erwin Griswold, who might have appealed the decision, chose not to, and also refused publicly to say why. Subsequently, in a private letter to an inquiring *New Republic* reader he expressed his belief that the Imperial Valley should be exempt from the 160-acre limitation because large landowners had long assumed that it would be – that is, you can't start enforcing laws now that haven't been enforced for 70 years.

Late last month, however, another federal district judge, William D. Murray of Butte, Montana, made an astounding ruling, astounding because of its straightforwardness, its boldness in this age of large-scale corporate farming, and its enormous potential impact on rural areas in the West. Judge Murray ruled that the residency requirement of the 1902 Reclamation Act is, today as ever, the law of the land, having never been repealed by Congress. The Interior Department, he said, should enforce it in the Imperial Valley.

Judge Murray's decision is the culmination of many years of legal and political maneuvering by Dr. Ben Yellen, a general practitioner in Brawley, California. Yellen is one of a dying breed of Populist gadflies who keep on fighting for the little guy even after all the little guys have given up. For decades he has been crusading almost singlehandedly against the large absentee landowners who have taken over the Imperial Valley, reaping millions in subsidies for themselves while leaving other residents without land, without power, and with little chance for self-improvement. It was Yellen who conceived and largely financed the legal challenge that led to Judge Murray's decision.

Now the question is whether the Nixon administration will permit Judge Murray's decision to stand unchallenged; if it does, the result could be a far-reaching redistribution of land in western reclamation areas to small farmers and farm workers, and a revitalization of those areas along democratic, as opposed to feudal, lines.

Spock's Specter

Enter The People's Party, née The Coalition, née Peace and Freedom, and in reality little more than a few score white radicals who met in Dallas over Thanksgiving and nominated Benjamin Spock to be their stand-in presidential candidate. The good doctor and company hope they can attract five, maybe eight percent of the vote next November, if Eugene McCarthy, Fred Harris or some other breakaway Democrat takes up their party's banner. It isn't a specter likely to haunt anyone. Last summer when the same people met in Albuquerque they had gotten on the ballot in five states; they are still on the ballot in five states. Last summer the fourth party organizers had everything a political movement needs except a popular base, leaders with stature, and money; today they have a new name. Nicholas Johnson, the FCC commissioner, turned down an offer to be their nominee. So did Ralph Nader and just about everyone else worth asking. Congressmen John Conyers and Ronald Dellums agreed not to protest if the People's Party nominated them to a shadow cabinet, but as practical black politicians they recognize that the action is still with the Democrats.

Conceivably there will be a role for a leftish fourth party in 1972, if, say, Hubert Humphrey or Henry Jackson is nominated by a dissention-wracked convention. In that case it will have to be a party that embraces far more than the white counterculture.

War Toys for Adults

Smugglers on the US-Mexican border are being spotted by Air Force "Pave Eagle" planes – unmanned, remote-controlled drones – formerly used in the Igloo White anti-infiltration program in Laos. Flying over remote stretches of the border, the planes of the US Border Patrol relay signals from hundreds of ground sensors to an Infilitration Surveillance Center, where huge computers diagnose the data. But as in Vietnam, the sophisticated electronic systems can't distinguish friend from foe. A wandering burro can send the border patrolmen scrambling for their jeeps. The

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ground sensors are adaptations of devices used to detect the sounds and vibrations of troop movements and supply trucks on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Their use on the Mexican border began in the summer of 1970, when the Border Patrol – an arm of the Justice Department – received a proposal for a sensor surveillance system from Sylvania Electronic Systems of Mountain View, California, which had produced sensors for use in Indochina. "The political implications of using surveillance equipment along a friendly foreign border," noted Sylvania, "have been considered by selecting equipment that can be deployed without attracting attention and easily concealed."

Other surveillance sensors are sprouting up all over. Beeping madly if someone comes near them, they surround prisons, vital utilities and industrial and governmental facilities. Near Washington, DC electronic sensors are hidden in shrubbery inside a fence enclosing a "maximum security subdivision" of 67 homes, each costing over $200,000. Westinghouse sensors help the Secret Service guard the White House.

Another technological Vietnam veteran now coming home is a black box that sees through walls. Engineers at the Army's Land Warfare Laboratory at Aberdeen, Maryland are modifying the PPS-14 foliage-penetration surveillance radar originally developed for spotting Vietcong in the thick jungles of Vietnam. Prototypes of the "Americanized" version of the radar – which will be capable of seeing through brick and cinderblock walls – will be available to police departments by the spring of 1972.

The police can already see through the dark, thanks to night vision devices developed for Vietnam. In New York City and Kissimmee, Florida police departments are using such devices to perform covert night surveillance while on routine patrol. The devices, capable of amplifying light levels 40,000 times, were developed by American industry during the 1960s to help the military detect night-fighting Vietnamese guerillas. The equipment was declassified in 1969. Such military suppliers as RCA, Raytheon and Aerojet General now sell police versions at prices ranging from $2000 to $8000 each, and the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) hopes to make available to the police a "snooperscope" priced under $600.

The Electronics Industries Association has estimated the annual market in law enforcement electronics at $400 million, most of which comes from LEAA grants. The police can spend their money on command and control systems, voiceprint equipment, mobile digital teleprinters, and laser fingerprint analyzers: a Dick Tracy bonanza.

Sylvania's SocioSystems Laboratory has reported on "The World's First Police Operated Low-Light-Level Television System." The equipment, which they claim is capable of displaying a man-sized object in extreme darkness from more than a half-mile away, has been installed high above the streets of Mt. Vernon, New York. The Justice Department, which financed the project with a $47,000 grant, hopes to assess the public reaction to 24-hour covert surveillance. "Only time will tell," concluded the Sylvania engineers, "if citizens will object to a 'Big Brother' type atmosphere."

Some engineers and government officials are not waiting for time to tell. Earlier this year, a study funded by the Justice Department recommended 24-hour television surveillance of city streets. The recommendation was made by a committee of the National Academy of Engineering, a group of corporate engineering executives that advises the government on technological matters. The committee members are executives of industries that would profit if their recommendations were accepted. To test the effectiveness of 24-hour TV surveillance, the committee urged the Nixon administration to implement a pilot program using 140 low-light-level television cameras deployed at every other intersection throughout an urban neighborhood covering two square miles. Of the estimated $1.5 million yearly cost, over $600,000 would go for the salaries of 175 "viewers."

The current sensor and TV surveillance projects are small-scale, but the combined interests of engineers, industry and government are pushing for rapid escalation, unimpeded by legal regulation. "There is a great unrestricted area of electronic surveillance and electronic countercrime measures in which there needs to be expansion and further innovation," Kentucky's assistant attorney general, Howard E. Trent, told engineers at the 1969 Carnahan Conference. Generally no legal limitations on electronic surveillance of large public areas exist, he added, and "the challenge is wide open."

Robert Barkan

MR. BARKAN *was a member of the technical staff at Bell Telephone Laboratories and a senior engineer at Sylvania Electronics Systems.*

The Poor in Puerto Rico

San Juan

On a summer day a tropical rainstorm flooded the streets of the banking district. In years past, the rain would have drained through the mangrove swamps, to the sea. In the new city of cement the water flowed like a surrealist river between the glass skyscrapers. A banker, his trousers rolled to his knees, his shoes in one hand and his attache case in the other, waded in knee-deep water, into the National City Bank.

Mirrored in the windows of the high-rising business towers were the slum barrios of the squatters along

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the Martin Pena Channel. The huts on stilts, decayed and flimsy, clung to the water's edge, perfumed by the stench of feces and filth. The office buildings were air conditioned, their windows sealed to the smell of tropical poverty.

"The new landless urban peasants," Francisco Aponte Perez, president of the Puerto Rican Bar, had called these squatters. Some say that 200,000 people live in these homeless homes. On the periphery of the suburban cities the *jibaros* came from the mountain villages to join the squatters who clash with the police over the legality of their huts. Hundreds of huts have been bulldozed and burned. The eviction of the squatters from *Villa Kennedy* was so brutal that it was "inhuman" declared Governor Luis Ferre. In Canovanas, near San Juan, "unidentified men" with police protection razed and burned 1000 huts in a single day.

On the "Islands of Paradise" Columbus thought he discovered, where mangos fall onto the hoods of passing cars, more than 600,000 destitute islanders now subsist on imported surplus-food rations. The agricultural lands have fallen into disuse, bypassed by *urbanizaciones* (suburbs) and industrialization. Last year's sugar crop was less than half of the harvest of 20 years ago. One quarter, if that, of the food consumed on the island was grown there. "We will soon import our papaya juice from the United States," a *jibaro* laughed, "in Coca Cola bottles!"

"Operation Bootstrap" – the "economic miracle" that was hailed as a "model for Latin America" – is still visible. From 1950 to 1970, the average family income rose from $1500 to $5677. Nearly 2000 factories have been enticed to the island by tax exemptions and cheap labor: "Average industrial hourly earnings of $1.76 compared to $3.30 on the mainland," promises a government brochure. The gross national product has zoomed from $775 million to $4100 million. "One of the world's strongest and most sustained records of economic growth," the Chemical Bank of New York comments; the ratio of profits to sales has been 15.3 percent compared to 5.1 percent on the mainland. "Puerto Rico Is The Most Profitable Address In The USA," boasts the government's brochure.

In boom years, the United States exported its prosperity to the island. Now, it has exported its recession. More than 100 factories went bankrupt in Puerto Rico last year. Forty garment shops have shut down. The industry that was the biggest employer on the island (Puerto Rico was the "Brassiere Capitol of the Western Hemisphere" in pre-Women's Lib days) had reduced its payroll from over 100,000 workers to 38,000. In a hopeful tone, *Fomento*, the government's industrial promotion agency, has noted "only nine" factory closings in the first quarter of this fiscal year, compared to 30 the previous summer.

Unemployment is officially set at one worker in ten. It is "probably 20 to 30 percent," says one garment manufacturer. In seeking to entice new industries by offering a large labor market *Fomento* has set the unemployment and underemployment figure at 34.4 percent; one worker in three. Even that untenable figure sweeps many of the unemployed under the beach chairs of the Hilton Hotels. In Ponce, the island's second largest city, unemployment jumped 24.4 percent last July alone. However, a Commonwealth Department of Labor report marked "For Official Use Only" neatly reduced the visibility of the jobless by noting that of 1500 who were laid off, the government itself hired 600 in June and 800 in July. So unemployment was kept at a mere 14.2 percent.

Luis Munoz, columnist for *The San Juan Star*, chides the "progress intoxicated leaders" for ignoring the unpleasant fact that since World War II the economic take of the top 20 percent of the people has risen from 50 to 55 percent, while the share of the poorest 20 percent has dropped from five to four percent. In the mountain villages of not too long ago, the *jibaros* were not unemployed, even when they were jobless. There was always something to do, a family to tend to, crops to grow and harvest. In the squatters huts in the cities of cement there is nothing to do. The unemployed man is a statistic. He has to eat someone else's surplus food. He is surplus, too.

Stan Steiner

STAN STEINER *is writing a book about Puerto Rico for Harper & Row.*

The Nixon Watch

Talk and Travel

The consultations that the President is having between December 13 and January 7 with the chief executives of France and Portugal in the Azores, of Great Britain in Bermuda, and of West Germany, Canada and Japan in Key Biscayne, Washington and San Clemente, would have been arranged, though probably not concentrated in so short a period, even if Mr. Nixon were not going to Communist China next February and to Moscow in May. As the "White House official," whom attentive followers of the news have come to identify automatically with Henry Kissinger, said aboard the President's airplane, on the way back to Washington on November 28 from a four-day interlude in California, the world and the power relationships that dominate it are changing with unprecedented speed. The pace of change gives Mr. Nixon ample excuse to satisfy his itch for summitry and travel and, in the course of doing so, to appease the vanities and allay the concerns of other chiefs of state and government;

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capitalize upon the popular interest in his journeys to Peking and Moscow; and fortify himself for the presidential campaign in 1972.

The announcements on successive days, in Washington and California, of the preliminary journeys and consultations aroused a suspicion that the President was engaged in a transparent political and publicity ploy. He is surrounded by professional promoters who are prone to that sort of prostitution of large events, but the facts in this instance tell more about the nature of the world and its statesmen than the suspicion would if it were justified. Mr. Nixon originally intended to have his meetings with Pompidou of France, Caetano of Portugal, Heath of Great Britain, Brandt of West Germany, and Sato of Japan announced simultaneously, in one package. The meeting with Trudeau of Canada was an afterthought, initiated from Ottawa and squeezed into the schedule without great enthusiasm. At the last moment, in Thanksgiving week, the White House staff was made forcefully aware that a packaged announcement would offend the other conferees. They wanted individual notice, with due priority accorded the facts that President Pompidou was to be first and that Mr. Nixon was to be Prime Minister Heath's guest in British Bermuda. Prime Minister Colombo of Italy was omitted by mutual and thoroughly discussed agreement that the parliamentary and presidential elections in Italy in early December would introduce a period of prolonged uncertainty. Colombo or his successor may yet be favored with a Nixon meeting, before the President sets off for Peking in late February.

Although the December-January meetings are billed primarily as preludes to the Peking and Moscow trips, they also are intended to provide discussion of issues that are judged in themselves to require high-level consultation. A widely accepted impression is that they are particularly intended to give the President opportunity to pull back from the extreme positions taken and abrasively asserted by Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally in the aftermath of Mr. Nixon's shattering blows on August 15 at the international monetary system and at the prevailing terms of international trade. His imposition of a 10 percent tariff surcharge on goods imported into the US and his suspension of the redemption of foreign-held dollars with gold did, among their other anticipated effects, disturb the political and diplomatic relations of the US with all of the governments involved in the coming round of talks. It is true as reported that the President's paramount security adviser, Henry Kissinger, has been telling Mr. Nixon that it's time for him to intervene personally and to soften the impact of the August actions. It is not true, as also reported, that Secretary Connally overplayed his hand and went beyond the President's intentions in demanding that other governments not only revalue their currencies to the US advantage but assume a greater share of the costs of allied defense and give US exporters a better break in their markets in return for removal of the 10 percent tariff surcharge. The President explicitly set forth those demands in his August speech and indicated that the surcharge would be lifted only when they were met to his satisfaction. His intention in the December-January meetings is not to repudiate Connally in any way. It is, on the contrary, to make the most of the shock that the President's August 15 announcements and Connally's aggressive implementation of them caused and, now that the desired effect has been had, to tie down and validate the compromises that are already in train. Kissinger's cautioning advice has run, not against the shock tactics in themselves, but against any temptation to let the tactics become permanent features of the administration's foreign policy and posture. As far back as last July, it may be worth noting in passage, Kissinger was known to feel at least as strongly as Connally does that such trading partners and competitors as Japan, France, and West Germany were getting a free ride in American markets at a no longer bearable degree of American expense and that, as both the President and his Treasury secretary have been saying, it was time to even out the monetary, defense and trading imbalance in the non-Communist world.

The purpose of the consultations, such immediate issues aside, is to give the invited officials a sense of participation in the President's preparations for the Peking and Moscow visits. Very little of his substantive intentions can be imparted to the conferees that has not already been thrashed out with them in normal diplomatic exchange. But the process of personal consultation is designed to make them feel better about the exercise than they otherwise might. If it enables them to share a bit of the anticipated glory (as with Pompidou and Heath) or (as with Sato in Japan) to assure their restive home constituencies that their national interests have been taken into full account, so much the better. If the preliminaries also diminish any hope in Peking and Moscow of creating new divisions or widening old ones between the US and what Mr. Nixon's press spokesman has been calling "our major allies," that will be accounted a worthwhile gain.

An incidental effect of the recent announcements has been to disclose a new arrangement between the President and Henry Kissinger. Three times since October, before and after his second exploratory visit to Peking and in conjunction with the announcement that Mr. Nixon will arrive there on February 21, Kissinger has talked to the press for quotation and on the record instead of holding to his previous talking only "on background" and for attribution only to anonymous "White House officials." During his latest exposure on November 30, Kissinger called himself "a briefer who is very reluctant not to be identified," thus playing for the pleasure of reporters upon his

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reputation for adequate pride in his expository prowess. His change of mode had actually been the subject of serious discussion with the President, who was persuaded that the previous Kissinger cover had been so thoroughly penetrated that any attempt to continue it as a regular practice would be futile and silly.

The essence of Kissinger's message on the Peking trip was that nothing much in the way of concrete and announced accomplishment should be expected. Nixon's unannounced hopes are a good deal more ambitious. For instance, no declared agreement upon a settlement of the Vietnam war or upon a ceasefire applying to all of Indochina is either expected or to be sought. But discussions that imaginably could lead to announced agreement on either or both scores two or three months after the visit are intended, and the preliminaries to just such discussions have been explored by Kissinger during his July and October visits to Peking and in other communication with Premier Chou En-lai. Similarly, there is no conceivable language in which the Peking leaders and Mr. Nixon could publicize any understanding that they may reach about the future status of the Republic of China on Taiwan. But an undeclared understanding, based upon mutual recognition of the certainty that Peking will never accept separate sovereignty for the Taiwan nationalists and that Mr. Nixon will not totally abandon them, is among the President's main objectives. Given that understanding, the goals of a negotiated accomodation between the Peking and Taiwan governments and of progress toward full and normal diplomatic relations between the US and the People's Republic should be attainable.

John Osborne

Failed Federal Housing

The US as Slumlord

The administration has a pressing reason for wanting to build virtually all subsidized rental housing from now on in the outer and not the inner city. In explaining HUD's new policy of scattering subsidy apartments, Secretary Romney tells us a lot about the scarcity of land in the inner city, about legitimate demands for social justice, and about the flight of jobs to the outer city necessitating new, lower-rent housing in the suburbs. But he doesn't publicly admit the motive of government self-interest: the Department of Housing and Urban Development will have accumulated, by 1978, a multibillion dollar investment in subsidized apartments (estimates range up to $80 billion in total obligations over the 40-year life of the mortgages) and those in the ghetto – about one-third of the present total – are going sour at an alarming rate. In short, HUD faces the grim prospect of becoming the nation's No. 1 slum landlord when privately developed but federally guaranteed and subsidized projects belly up, the hulks turned over to the government for management or disposal.

Having only barely recuperated from the recent speculation scandals of the homeownership program, HUD is now sifting the early but dreary returns on interest-subsidy programs for apartments, particularly projects for low- and moderate-income families. The news is bad from Boston, where, for example, the rate of default on mortgages is 80 percent for the 3022 inner-city apartments rehabilitated three years ago. Housing consultant Hortense W. Gabel took a reading on New York City subsidized projects less than three years old and found that many were "already exhibiting mild to severe maintenance problems." HUD's own statisticians have warned Romney to brace for a five percent default rate. George Sternlieb, an expert on inner-city housing at Rutgers University, says flatly "the bulk of all the housing that was built under [interest subsidy] in the central cities is essentially bankrupt."

Real estate entrepreneurs, with large profits already pocketed in many cases, say the problems are too severe in the inner city, and they won't take the plunge again without some kind of protection, such as an association with a community-based organization. "Why should we go into an area where we know we'll get our brains knocked out before we're in round two," said Gerald Schuster, president of Continental Wingate, a Boston construction firm. Schuster and like-minded businessmen have difficulty coping with the demands of community groups for heavy minority representation on construction crews and for a voice in the direction of the projects. They are also unsophisticated about the slum syndrome of crime, drugs, despair and decay that only too readily engulfs their units.

To the surprise of no one familiar with past Federal Housing Administration programs, the real beneficiaries of the subsidies are not low- and moderate-income families ($4000 to $12,000 a year) but the housing business and a new breed of real estate investor. "The housing being produced, by and large, is a disaster," said Roland L. (Sam) Larson, executive director of the Inter Faith Housing Corp. of Boston, one of the nation's leading nonprofit housing packagers. "It's a total ripoff and nobody is going to jail for it. The programs make the rich richer through subsidies but the tenants get only higher rents and modestly improved housing." This from Anthony Henry, executive director of the National Tenants Or-

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ganization: "I think it's going to be worse than public housing and in a shorter period of time."

Inspection of numerous inner-city subsidy projects by this reporter found appalling instances of shoddy and inept construction. Plumbing backups, severe water leaks and chilling drafts are common. Walls are generally paper thin, doors poorly hung, windows of the cheapest design. The builders, with some justification, blame Congress for unrealistic cost ceilings that prevent quality building. Tenants, with more justification, blame the FHA for inadequate inspection that allows corner cutting in construction.

Rents for these apartments – most of them located in seedy, crime-infested neighborhoods – approach middle-class levels, despite the government's covering all but one percent of the interest charges. Rent scales at Methunion Manor in the South End of Boston run up to $222 a month for a five-bedroom apartment – hardly a rent within the means of even a "moderate" income family. A five-city HUD survey of subsidy projects found the average tenant paying 34 percent of income for rent. The goal was 25 percent. Adding insult, many sponsors have felt forced by soaring operating costs to extract rent increases from these already hard-pressed tenants shortly after the projects opened, the survey showed. The predictable result has been a coast-to-coast wave of tenant strikes and law suits.

The main tenant complaint is about the large profits generated by the special tax preferences given subsidized housing in the 1969 tax revision act. The tax shelters, plus the congressionally mandated goal of 6 million subsidized units by 1978, plus the dire depression of the housing industry in the late 1960s, all combined in a volatile mix that allowed HUD to drive subsidized housing starts to a record 500,000 this year. (Some subsidized projects are occupied with another 2820 under construction.)

The tax shelter, says Boston entrepreneur Max Kargman, is the key to understanding the financial dynamic of multifamily subsidized housing: "That's what makes the whole deal work; it's what makes it profitable for the builder. Otherwise why should he put in all this time and effort, with all the risks and struggle. For what?"

The builder-developers make their profit by selling shelter equity to rich professionals and businessmen. For a percentage of the 90 percent federally guaranteed mortgage, usually between 12 and 20 percent, the investors purchase the right to offset taxes on other earnings with the rapid depreciation losses permitted on the full value of the apartments. In other words, on a $1-million project, they would pay between $120,000 and $200,000 for $1 million in depreciation used over a five-to-ten-year period. The return in federal income taxes avoided can run as high as 30 percent a year for the investor in the 50 percent tax bracket. These absentee landlords, known as limited dividend partners, have no hand in management, which remains in most cases the responsibility of the builder-developer. The investors often don't even know where their investment is located unless their broker tells them.

Shelter sale is also the honey that draws entrepreneurs to subsidized housing, especially so-called easy fringe and suburban projects catering to young, white professionals with low but rising income. With actual cash equity of only $33,000 – a not unusual proportion – a developer of a $1-million project can get a cash return in less than two years equal to five times his investment, if not more, depending on his sophistication.

The inequities and distortions are blatant in the shelter dynamic. When operating costs increase, builder-developers resort to rent hikes and won't dip into front-end profits from the sale or use of shelters. The public hears only about the current $175-million-a-year cost of interest subsidies on the apartments and is ignorant of the millions lost to the Treasury each year because of the tax writeoffs. Furthermore, because profit dominates the process, private enterprise is drawn to the safest location possible for building subsidized apartments – fringe areas where 61 percent are located. "The guy who makes the most money is the guy who builds the projects where they don't need them anyhow," said housing consultant Robert H. Kuehn of Boston. Although the taxpayer guarantees the mortgage, puts up the interest subsidies, and supplies the financial coal, says Milton Semer, a former HUD official in the Johnson administration, private interests are determining where this new brand of public housing will be built, who will live in it, and under what circumstances. And most profits are front-end, meaning that while the government has a 40-year stake in the mortgage, the money men are home free from possible recapture of profits by the Internal Revenue Service if the project remains viable for ten years. "There's nothing to keep their feet to the fire," said an aide to Romney, worrying about a massive bailout of the money interests in the 1980s.

Even nonprofit housing sponsors are thinking up ways to harvest a share of the dollars spinning out of the program. Fearing a loss of their preferred tax status, the nonprofits until now left the tax gimmicks unused when they launched a project. But at least seven of the community-based and church groups have recently launched joint ventures with entrepreneurs, planning to use part of the shelter proceeds to support social services in the projects. "We have a low-income housing program in this country and we are going to use it," said Larry M. Lefkowitz, director of public affairs for the Non-Profit Housing Center in Washington. "You can either do nothing or use the tools in your tool box."

What went wrong with a program once hailed as the ideal way public seed money could generate pri-

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vate sector enterprise of social worth? For one thing, HUD officials, pressured by Romney until recently to meet production goals, have shaved operating and maintenance cost estimates 10-to-20 percent to bring proposed projects within federal cost limits. Since initial rents were pegged to the unrealistic estimates, the predictable result has been increases shortly after, or even before apartments are occupied. Needless to say, general inflation has added to the cost squeeze. For another thing, builders say they can't construct durable subsidized projects because Congress has set unrealistically low cost limits in the mistaken belief that there is such a thing as low-cost (versus low-rent) housing for the poor. And Congress made niggardly allowance for amenities, really necessities, such as playgrounds, day care facilities, teenage recreation centers, and counseling. Particularly important in the government's view is the short supply of competent housing managers.

All these problems are intensified by crime, drugs and decay in ghetto projects. The most desirable tenants tend to leave at the first opportunity for something safer. Finding the right replacement tenant becomes more difficult. Slowly, the project becomes poorer. Repair costs rise, rent receipts decline. Deterioration accelerates. "I just don't have the dollars to stem the tide," complained one hard-pressed housing manager in the Roxbury section of Boston. "Society asks him (the manager of low-income housing) to take on all its problems – drugs, alcohol, and welfare dependency – then blames him when he fails," said Edwin D. Abrams, a Boston housing consultant who also manages subsidy units. "But the government provides none of the social services money that might make this possible."

Faced with the necessity of doing something about a deteriorating situation, the government has the option of tinkering with the interest subsidy formula or changing direction completely in housing the poor. One first-aid method might entail operating subsidies, such as those recently instituted in public housing, to keep rents down and projects afloat. A variant might be infusion of money for social services. A third could be a return to direct, low-interest federal loans for construction. Radical surgery might entail abandoning interest subsidies and moving to direct stipends, allowing poor families to shop for shelter that doesn't carry the social stigma of a "project." Tony Henry and the NTO would have tenants themselves manage and control subsidized units. Norman V. Watson, the assistant HUD secretary for housing management, voiced the government's confusion on just what to do when he observed: "We've got to look at a housing strategy real quick."

Ken Hartnett

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Getting the Goods On the Government

Early next year, a congressional committee will hold hearings on the Freedom of Information Act, the 1967 law that, with a few narrow exceptions, was supposed to raise the blinds so that outsiders could see what's happening inside government. The hearings may be more of an autopsy than an examination, for it has been demonstrated that the government can't be forced to disclose important information it wishes to keep secret.

Three recent law suits illustrate the difficulty of enforcing the act. First, in September, shortly after the Congress had killed the supersonic transport plane, several environmentalist groups filed suit in a US district court to obtain a secret government study that was said to have condemned the SST. The White House did not deny its existence but refused to release it, claiming that the report was advisory, for executive use only. It finally did release the document, but only after the issue was moot – the SST was dead – and it became clear that the courts might set a legal precedent which would lead to far greater public accessibility to government records. Then, on October 8, "concerned citizens" filed a federal suit to obtain several government studies allegedly concerning contingency plans for US military intervention in the Middle East, plus studies pertaining to the history, nature, and extent of American involvement and commitment in that area. The State Department denied the existence of some of the studies and refused to release others on the grounds that they contain information vital to national security. Finally, in a publicized attempt, the Committee for Nuclear Responsibility and six other groups tried to get a report submitted to the President on the environmental effects of the Cannikin nuclear test. The Atomic Energy Commission refused to release the report, though it delivered sections of it for Judge George L. Hart Jr.'s inspection.

These three suits and more than 100 others have been brought to court under the Freedom of Information Act, passed by Congress as an amendment to Section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act (1946). The Freedom of Information Act eliminated the specification in the original law that only persons or groups "properly and directly concerned" with a government agency's documents or records were entitled to them. Most records, it said, should be available to "any person." The amendment also gave individuals or groups the right to appeal to a US district court if their requests for information were denied. It also set up nine categories of information exempt from public disclosure: internal instructions to agency staff; confidential information about private individuals; trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial infor-

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mation; geological and geophysical data, including maps; and information specifically required by Executive Order 10501 to be kept secret in the interest of the national defense or foreign policy. The three law suits mentioned above and the most controversial suits involved the last category – executive exemption.

In 1969, Ralph Nader and a team of associates harshly criticized agency compliance with the act, in some instances charging deliberate concealment and falsification of records and information, and more generally, agency favoritism and delay.

In preparation for its 1972 hearings, the foreign operations and government information subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations sent a questionnaire to government agencies on their methods of responding to requests for records and materials under the act. It asked, for example, how many formal requests for access to records each agency had received, granted, or refused and the refusal's cause; the time involved in the granting or refusal of records; the legend used to identify records unavailable outside the government but not classifiable under executive exemption; the number of agency officials authorized to classify material "Top Secret," "Secret," and "Confidential" under executive order; and agency directives, orders and rules implementing the Freedom of Information Act. Although replies have not yet been formally analyzed, more than two-thirds of the questionnaires have been returned to the subcommittee, and certain trends are visible – the most crucial being, according to one subcommittee staffman, the absence within many agencies of a willingness to comply with the intent of the act. Hundreds of requests for information have been refused.

Donald A. Giannella, a law professor at Villanova University, found that charges made for copying government documents differ widely and that the variation "... cannot possibly be explained on the grounds of differing labor or other costs." Copying charges range from 10 cents or less in agencies such as OEO and the Securities and Exchange Commission to 40 cents a page in the State Department and 50 cents in the Department of Transportation. The fee most often charged is 25 cents a page. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Atomic Energy Commission, and several other agencies charge a special fee of up to one dollar for the first page copies.

Although the Freedom of Information Act allows agencies to charge a "reasonable fee" for record searches, the search fees, like copy costs, vary from $2.50 an hour (Veterans Administration) to $8.00 an hour (Post Office). The search fees most often charged by the agencies, according to Giannella, are $3.50 and $5.00 an hour. The high fees charged for copying and document searches in some agencies are explained by the calculation of "indirect" as well as direct costs involved in the provision of information requested, indirect costs including building and equipment depreciation, rent, management and maintenance costs, and in some cases, the cost of the average time an agency employee waits in line at the duplicating machine. Agencies have argued that the charges tend to discourage "frivolous requests," but the spirit and language of the act do not support this policy of discouragement, nor the delays often encountered. Consumers Union reported that it waited 10 months for a final decision on information requested under the act. Others have waited up to a year for requested documents.

Time-consuming standard request forms and other administrative procedures act as deterrents. Often, agencies do not specify and make known the person or persons responsible for handling requests for information. An individual unfamiliar with an agency's procedures doesn't know how to appeal an initial refusal, before resorting to the courts. The cost of taking a refusal to court can be prohibitive. Exempt and nonexempt information under the act are inadvertently or purposefully commingled. The subcommittee questionnaires are revealing what many critics of government operations have long recognized, that classification systems within many agencies are capricious and tend to produce overclassification.

Not all the blame, however, rests with the agencies. The courts have been reticent about exploring this relatively new area of law. In the suit involving the Cannikin nuclear test, Judge Hart rejected the request for the AEC study, but the US Court of Appeals reversed the decision and ordered him to examine the report. Hart called the higher court's decision "outrageous" – one which would allow the courts to ask the President for virtually anything. In *Epstein vs. Resor*, the district court judge did not wish to review the documents in question. His decision was reversed on appeal and his attitude criticized when the House subcommittee held hearings touching on the act last June. But even if the courts decide that the executive's or an agency's refusal to grant information is not justifiable, how can the court's decision be enforced? "We could write the strongest freedom of information law in the world," says one subcommittee staffman, "but it would only work if there were a willingness within the executive to carry out the law's intent."

Hostility toward public scrutiny of government records is probably a result of several factors: a penchant for playing cards close to chest, inherent in most governments; the extra cost and effort of satisfying requests for information; the executive's wariness,

COMING: the shoestring presidential campaign of Sam Yorty

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which seems to increase as elections approach, about revealing anything which might prove politically embarrassing. When the executive's decisions on national security and foreign policy matters are under attack, as they are today, the Freedom of Information Act will probably continue to be useful to citizens seeking routine government information, but ineffective in opening windows on the inner sanctums.

Judith Miller

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Selling the Pentagon in North Carolina

Army Snow Job

by William L. Robb

A. J. Liebling once wrote in *The Wayward Press* that the odds against a reporter really understanding a new situation and new characters on an assignment are impossibly high. "The best reporters occasionally fail badly, and the fair ones half-fail often," he wrote. Drew Middleton's story on the army's new "Nation-Building" program in the Sunday, March 7 *N.Y. Times* was a case in point.

"Kenneth Locklear," Middleton began, "a six-year-old Lumbee Indian boy, had never been to see a doctor. Doctors, even the two overworked ones in Hoke County, NC, cost money. The Locklears have their pride. They did not want to go into debt to a doctor. But Kenneth was badly scalded and people said there was an army doctor working at the health center in Raeford [the county seat]. Kenneth was taken to see the doctor, Capt. George R. Reavell, who wears the Green Beret of the Special Forces, and now the child is doing well."

Headlined "To Carolinians, a Green Beret Means a Helping Hand," and accompanied by a picture of a Green Beret sergeant leading North Carolina sixth-graders in calisthenics, Middleton's story went on to tell how, since October, 1970, "army doctors and medical corpsmen, engineers and chaplains, military police and local government experts have worked with the people and the authorities in the two counties [Hoke and Anson] to improve medical care, hygiene, sanitation, educational facilities and utilities."

Lt. Gen. John J. Tolson, commanding general of Ft. Bragg and the originator of the "Nation-Building" concept, told Middleton that the army envisioned the program as training for a mission it will be increasingly entrusted with abroad, under the Nixon Doctrine: helping other countries stabilize their societies and strengthen their internal defense.

Middleton then quoted Col. David McFadden Jr., assistant chief of staff for civil-military operations, as saying that "In the past, we could train personnel to go through the motions of training on civil affairs and domestic action matters, but there wasn't that much on-the-job training, which we think is vital for units that could be called upon at a moment's notice to conduct operations in overseas areas. But don't get the idea Nation-Building is just for training troops. The concern for assisting underprivileged people right at the doorstep of Ft. Bragg is equally important."

As evidence of the army's benevolent intentions, Middleton cited a string of Special Forces civic action successes in Anson County, N C , one of the hundred poorest regions in the country: the building of a dispensary, installation of playground equipment, replacing of broken windows in a school, first-aid and gym instruction, repairing of electric generators, and aid to the police department in controlling drug abuse.

Even if all these claims for Anson County are true – and the army's efforts, praiseworthy as far as they went, weren't much – Middleton's subsequent listing of equal gains in Hoke County, the second pilot/target region, was false.

Army medical personnel (Special Forces and 82nd Airborne) did administer TB tests on 700-plus schoolchildren, as Middleton reported, and Green Beret medics and two civil affairs trainees had been working at the Hoke Health Center since last December, staffing clinics and updating and filing the Center's six-year records backlog (TB, maternity,

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death certificates, immunizations, etc. – a secretarial nightmare). Army personnel had *not*, however, "brought county medical records up to date," as Middleton claimed. As a GI member of the 28th Civil Affairs Company who worked on records at the Center for five months, Dec. '70-Apr. '71, I can say categorically that Middleton erred. The work was still in progress and far from completed when I left in mid-April.

But Middleton was only warming to his tale. He ticked off a string of army successes in Hoke County that were all nonevents; not only did they not take place, but the brass had vetoed several of them:

"The military police have helped the Raeford police department in training recruits and in modernizing the records. Engineers have helped the town find additional supplies of water. Old but still valuable city equipment has been repaired by mechanics." All fictions of someone's imagination!

Middleton quoted Dr. Harry McLean, the former health director in Raeford, as believing "one action by Col. Dinapoli's [XVIIIth Corps surgeon] men was of national significance. They learned that two women in the secondary stage of syphilis had had 62 local contacts. A doctor and two corpsmen found and treated 36 of the contacts in two days. . . . That stopped an epidemic, believe me," said Dr. McLean.

Dr. McLean's anecdote was sheer hyperbole. County health records on syphilis infection show that the disease has been endemic among the poor white, black and Indian populations of Hoke County for decades. Dr. McLean, through Middleton, was blowing the incident out of all proportion.

All in all, a *Times* reader could easily have gotten the impression that the army was well on the way to eradicating disease and poverty in two very poor counties, thereby winning the hearts and minds of the people. The facts are far less sensational. And the army's motives? – certainly less altruistic than army public-relations men snowed Middleton into believing.

In my five months at the Hoke Health Center, I was in almost daily contact with members of the 28th Civil Affairs Co. liaison team who were ostensibly coordinating the program in Hoke County, as well as with the Green Beret doctor (Capt. Reavell) and NCO medics sent from Ft. Bragg. During the first month or so, the two civil affairs officers (rotated every two weeks, for maximum training advantage to the army but minimum convenience to county officials) and one other enlisted man and myself were excited by the program and worked hard to get it moving.

Our spirit drooped as we saw the grudging support by Ft. Bragg higher-ups and began to guess at – and hear our own commanding officer, Lt. Col. Israel Lopez, along with several other key officers up the chain of command, confirm off the record – the political and public relations considerations that lay behind the Nation-Building idea: the program would be a shiny PR coup for the army, helping to restore its tarnished reputation, and would look good on Tolson's service record, possibly earning him another star. My CO's reaction to a speech by Brig. Gen. Henry Emerson [Special Forces commandant at Bragg], reprinted in the Green Beret magazine *Veritas*, in which he dwelt on the program's training possibilities, was that the big brass should keep the army's ulterior motives under their pistol belts and not publicize the training angle.

As our disillusionment grew, we arrived for work in Raeford later and later, took longer coffee and lunch breaks, left earlier every day and came to look on the whole exercise as a good way to "ghost" away from the fort. Requests for army personnel or materiel help on projects like repairing a tractor were several times denied (sometimes, in all fairness, rightly so, as with a request for army personnel to help pick up litter on county roads), and we often met confusion and pessimism from the brass who required daily reports from our liaison team. In short, there was much confusion in the army over the army's proper role in Hoke County and much balking and buck-passing in our immediate chain-of-command. Except for a set of SOP guidelines written in armyese style – we were given no real guidance on the Nation-Building program from the Department of the Army.

Apart from the question of the army's motives in "Nation-Building," there is the more important question of the wisdom of military involvement in domestic or foreign civil affairs and antipoverty work. The army's work in both Anson and Hoke counties amounted to little more than cosmetic surgery – making short-term, high-visibility surface improvements in regions that need open-heart surgery. The US Army is being trained as a counter-revolutionary force; it is not equipped, philosophically or practically, to spearhead social and political renewal either in poor counties at home or poor nations abroad.

Finally, there is something cynical in the army's readiness to manipulate public opinion (CBS-TV and *Time* magazine also sent teams to report the army's antipoverty program). For example: what will happen in Hoke County where, as Middleton noted, two doctors and two clinics serve a population of 17,000? With little likelihood that enough new civilian doctors will settle in the county to meet the medical needs of the poor there, how long will it be before the army loses interest in maintaining its medical presence there? How can army civil affairs personnel who who are being farmed out to the county for two-week stints on a training exercise make any real contributions to the lives of residents? And suppose the army took its domestic rural development work seriously and stopped playing politics with it: how would the lessons learned in Hoke County apply in Honduras

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or Cambodia? Before being drafted, I taught English for two years in Thailand as a Peace Corps Volunteer, and I submit the answer most cultural anthropologists or Peace Corps Volunteers would give is: "not much."

The rest of A. J. Liebling's quote is apt: "A good reporter, if he chooses the right approach, can understand a cat or an Arab. The choice is the problem, and if he chooses wrong he will come away scratched or baffled." Middleton chose the wrong approach in North Carolina: He accepted what the army told him.

Bogus Reform

Campaign Funding

by Walter Pincus

A basic problem with campaign reform legislation – as proposed this year – is that no one has taken the trouble beforehand to lay out for the legislators and the public the *actual* ways in which presidential, senatorial and congressional campaigns are run. As a result, what the public is being given as disclosure reform may turn out to be next year's loophole. And proposals designed to limit the amount of money put into campaigns may turn out to have increased the money available for use by the same candidates through other committees.

One case in point is the Democrats' proposed $1 checkoff plan for financing the 1972 presidential election campaign. In the five days of often sarcastic, sometimes bitter Senate debate that preceded passage of the measure, there was not one carefully detailed presentation of the complex manner by which such campaigns have actually been financed in the past. A Democratic National Committee official who followed the matter closely later suggested that none of the senators involved in the debate in fact knew how it was done. That, of course, would include two senators, Goldwater and Humphrey, who themselves had been presidential candidates.

Failure to understand presidential campaign financing doesn't stop at the doors of the Senate. I would guess there are fewer than a dozen men living today – Democrats or Republicans – who fully understand the intricate processes of loans, debts, cash, multiple committees, and contribution techniques that have supported national campaigns in the past. Among them would be Attorney General John Mitchell and Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans (Nixon 1968); Minneapolis trucking tycoon Robert Short (Humphrey 1968); Washington lawyer Richard Maguire (Johnson 1964); US Ambassador to the Netherlands, J. W. Middendorf (Goldwater 1964). When the time came to talk of campaign reform, although most of them spoke of the need, none ever came forward to "tell it like it was" so that legislative changes now before Congress and the President could be based on practice rather than on assumption.

Thus the public was forced to accept as true the statements of Senate proponents and even some opponents of the checkoff legislation that a presidential campaign is run and financed solely from a national headquarters. Such, however, is not the case.

An American presidential campaign is a highly integrated total election effort that stretches from the national candidate's headquarters through a myriad of party and presidential candidate state-level groups down in one form or other to the congressional districts, county, city, ward, and finally precinct levels. And the money to pay the bills for a presidential campaign goes far beyond the highly publicized reports made by the national party committees in Washington. For example, when a presidential candidate appears in New York City at Madison Square Garden, chances are some state or local organization paid for the hall, the bands, the decorations, the tickets, the ushers, the local advertising, the local television time (if any is purchased), the cars for the candidate and his entourage, even the buses that brought the party supporters in from the suburbs. And when you add up the costs of three or four such meetings a day, several days at a stretch, over a two-month campaign, you come up with a substantial total in just this one category of locally-assumed presidential campaign costs.

In 1968, the Nixon campaign organization reported

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raising some $25 million at the national headquarters level. That figure does not include expenses of Nixon-Agnew committees in every one of the 50 states. Since the total for one statewide Florida committee ran to $380,000, one could guess that at least another $10 million nationally was involved for such "citizen" committees at the state level.

The Senate-passed checkoff legislation, to which the President objects, would provide $20.4 million in federal funds to a national-party candidate who would agree not to raise any additional private contributions. Despite assurances from Democratic senatorial proponents that this sum would be all that is needed, such an amount would not be enough under today's normal campaigning procedures to finance *in its entirety* a national presidential campaign. If you talk about the true nature of such a campaign to Democratic professionals, they will readily concede that additional funds would be necessary. How much would have to be put in at the state or local levels is the only question. Already there is talk about how to evade the complete prohibition of outside funds by making a presidential candidate's appearance part of the local candidates' effort rather than the national presidential campaign.

In several key areas – public reporting, enforcement, and limitations of unauthorized committees – the checkoff bill shows the same type of weakness that permitted the current campaign fund legislation to become "more loophole than law." Take reporting. Although responsibility for this is given the Comptroller General, his reports on federal funds disbursed by the presidential candidates are not required by the legislation to be made public at regular periods prior to the election. The only public reports are scheduled for after the election and then in summary form. Enforcement shows the same type of almost-no-punishment-after-the-crime that we have today. The Comptroller General who finds that a candidate's party benefited from outside contributions – after saying it would accept none – must return the amount involved to the US Treasury. There also are criminal sanctions, but who believes that a President-elect or a defeated presidential candidate would be indicted or convicted in such circumstances? Finally, the unauthorized committees supporting a candidate are not barred – out of fear of raising the constitutional freedom-of-speech issue. They are limited, however, to raising only $1000. Such a provision will only guarantee the creation of several hundred or even thousand committees to meet whatever expenses need to be covered.

These basic weaknesses are magnified by the Democrats' promotion of the checkoff as a major answer to the publicized campaign fund problem. In a way it is too bad they have sought to oversell their product, for it has within it some practical and useful reforms. First there is the idea of a federal subsidy – but it should be one for specific limited expenses. Instead of seeking $20.4 million, which is substantially above the $11 million they raised with difficulty in 1968, the Democrats should have sought a lesser amount – a sum that would guarantee them a reasonable staff, reasonable travel and communications and a basic national television exposure. Such a basic subsidy would, in my mind, have better served their own purposes and those of real reform.

The reform bills that passed the Senate in August and the House last week have some of the same weaknesses in the details of their enforcement of limits and public disclosure provisions. Of course the main input to a reporting law is the manner of enforcement. If the person or persons responsible for that enforcement fail to perform, then any law becomes useless. Today neither the Clerk of the House nor the Attorney General shows any interest in enforcing the law currently on the books. As lax as is its language, there is, for example, no review for accuracy or completeness of the reports that are filed. No one has taken the responsibility to see that all present national political committees as defined in the act are in fact reporting.

Under the proposed new legislation, limits on the amounts to be spent on behalf of federal candidates are made, but will not apply to so-called "unauthorized committees" – those which are established without a candidate's consent. Since business, corporate and citizens' groups as well as unions are moving more and more into campaign financing through just such committees, their exemption from the limitation rules opens a potentially wide loophole. The House, furthermore, would require identifying contributions of more than $100. Big contributors, to remain anonymous, would merely have to make multiple hundred-dollar contributions.

The comprehensive reporting provisions of the new legislation open up a slightly different problem. Under the proposed law, every committee in any state which raises or spends $1000 or more on federal candidates will have to file a report. Such committees could easily run into the thousands. Thus the enforcement – if you call it that – of timely disclosure will be for all practical purposes passed on to the local news media. The general lethargy of the media in seriously reporting campaign finances as part of the overall election story hopefully will change with the availability of detailed information on money in politics. Otherwise, the object of disclosure in informing the electorate *before* the election probably will be lost.

Today's campaign reform efforts have turned more partisan than at any time in the past. But the crescendo of charges on all sides that today's campaign funding system is corrupt has deeply sunk into the public mind. The Republicans are well fixed and appear to have no desire to ease the financing problems that will face a Democratic nominee. Thus the checkoff proposal faces a presidential veto. (Ironically if Mr. Nixon signed the measure and enforced its provisions

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on the Democratic candidate who took federal financing, the President might have a better issue.) But the Republicans want no strict accounting made of the money they have raised or will raise next year.

Time, however, is running out on the promise to reform the system. In fact, the promise and failure to pass and implement reforms may contain more danger to our political system than the ills that have been so publicized about the system they want to change. Thus, although the individual party stakes seem high, they do not compare to what could be lost by failure of any measure to emerge this year. Both the Congress and the President must realize that caught in the middle of these two contending party pressures is not just the proposition of campaign fund reform, but also the American public's faith in its own political process.

Democrats' Default

The Non-Answer To Nixonomics

by Melville J. Ulmer

Economics, so they say, will be the dominant issue of the coming presidential campaign, overshadowing war, and law and order. If so, President Nixon's new economic program, wobbly and rickety though it may be, looks sturdy enough as of now to carry him to victory. All the polls show the President outdistancing every potential Democratic rival, as well as getting a solid vote of endorsement on his economic policies. Even his wage and price controls, despite the wariness of labor and the uncertainties confronting business, have won clear majority support. Such popularity cannot be attributed to the merits of President Nixon's program, which are in fact highly questionable, or to his past record in the economic sphere, which is one of conspicuous failure; rather the source must be found in the quality of the alternatives as presented by the opposition – Muskie, Humphrey, Kennedy, McGovern, Jackson, Lindsay and others who have had or could have presidential ambitions. All have whooped and hollered about small details of the President's policies, and have had as much impact on public opinion as a position paper by the vice president of the freshman class of a junior high school. Not one of the Democratic frontrunners has challenged Nixon's basic economic ideas, for the excellent but unfortunate reason that they share them.

The President's approach to the nation's central problem of economic instability is grounded in the conventional wisdom of orthodox economic doctrine, and his past or present advisers in this area – Herbert Stein, Paul McCracken, Ezra Solomon, Hendrik Houthakker, and Arthur Burns – are acknowledged authorities. The economic advisers to Muskie, Humphrey, Kennedy, *et. al,* are similarly well versed in the traditional doctrine, adept masters of the identical textbooks. But those who say "Me too, only better!" do not make dramatically attractive alternatives to those who are already running things. They do not offer the nation the imaginative alternate route, the prospect for real improvement over a dismal past, that it ought to have.

The key difficulty is that the traditional tools of economic stabilization – the best that conventional economic advisers, both Democratic and Republican, now offer – have been tried for more than 20 years and been found wanting. President Nixon's present cure for unemployment, a proposed reduction in taxes, is the same technique used with considerable fanfare in the Kennedy-Johnson administrations. True, there is a typical and predictable Republican bias favoring reductions for business as against the remainder of the population. But to attack the bias, as virtually every Democratic leader has, is not to challenge the basic technique but only a serious imperfection in its form. In any case the flaw has been corrected at least in part by Congress in the new revenue bill, and the President has offered little opposition to the revisions, except for the hot issue of the checkoff for election campaign financing and, to a lesser extent, the magnitude of the overall reduction in taxes.

In invoking mandatory wage and price controls President Nixon actually went farther to the left than the proposals of most Democrats, whose economic experts such as Walter Heller and Arthur Okun had

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generally asked for no more than jawboning. Of course, with direct controls, the President also moved to the left of his own economic advisers. The important point, though, is that Democrats cannot logically or convincingly challenge this seminal component of the President's economic program, nor have they tried. At most, they may complain as has *The New Republic* ("What Prices?," Oct. 30, and "Where the Shoe Pinches," Nov. 20, 1971), that the administration's wage and price regulations are poorly conceived, ineffectively enforced, inadequately planned, and biased in their impact. Although framed in colorful and sometimes dramatic rhetoric, the typical Democratic critique of Republican economics is best characterized as quibbling. The speakers themselves, whether "centrists" Muskie and Humphrey or "leftists" McGovern and Kennedy, must be excellent actors, as they are, to get excited about it. At worst, their self-righteous carping seems petulant. Thus, all leading Democrats and their most faithful journalistic interpreters, such as Hobart Rowen of *The Washington Post*, have deplored the persistent sluggishness of economic activity and continuing high unemployment. Nixon's New Economic Policy is failing, they complain, and more vigorous measures must be taken to push production and sales ahead. Yet every newspaper reader must know that President Nixon has proposed stimulative measures – the tax reductions mentioned above – and that the resulting Revenue Act of 1971 has since been debated for more than three months in the Democratically controlled Congress and is only at present writing being readied for executive approval and implementation. No doubt the President's proposals have been strengthened and liberalized through this legislative process. But it will take some time, after the revenue bill's provisions have been put into effect, before they can have much impact on the pace of business.

Ironically, though you wouldn't know it from the Democratic rebuttal, the Nixon economic program is highly vulnerable. The use of traditional Keynesian fiscal policy to reduce unemployment on the one hand, or to check inflation on the other, has repeatedly been proven ineffective, even though it has been tested again and again, under both conservative and liberal auspices, ever since the end of World War II. Each time the economy is pumped up with tax reductions or additional government spending, unemployment recedes but inflation accelerates. Each time, then, that government "corrects" inflation with higher taxes and/or reduced public spending, it succeeds in slowing prices but produces unemployment. In this way the orthodox fiscal measures, which the Nixon administration persists in using, have kept the nation on a seesaw of instability. Nor have direct price controls, though of some temporary help in emergencies, ever checked inflation for long when pressures were intensified, either at home during World War II or Korea, or during the several tests applied in peacetime in most of the countries of Western Europe. Almost constantly over the past 25 years the US economy has operated with seriously excessive unemployment, sometimes more, sometimes less, the chief exceptions being war periods. Yet over that 25-year span the price level more than doubled. In seeking stability, with the orthodox tools, we have found unemployment and inflation too. This is the economic dilemma that President Nixon has studiously neglected to confront, and that his Democratic critics have either failed to understand or have timidly avoided.

President Nixon's present plan, apparently, is to elude the next showdown, the next crisis in economic policy, until after Election Day. The immediate strategy, which the President has announced, is to permit a slow expansion in business activity through next year, stimulated mainly by the proposed tax reductions. According to the most popular administration estimates, unemployment may be down to around 5.2 percent of the labor force by election time, a distinct improvement over recent experience but still a substantial distance – a good 2 percentage points – short of full employment. With such sluggish, though improving, performance, following 12 months of stagnant recession, inflation should be held reasonably in check, particularly if a modicum of help is obtained from wage and price controls. But not long after the election, should the President win, he will have to confront the dilemma he has thus far been avoiding. If business activity continues to move ahead, inflation will surely gather force and break through even a vigorous and comprehensive system of price controls, not to mention the flimsy and incomplete system the administration has erected. The only way to stop it, with the conventional Keynesian tools, is to "dampen" the economy by inducing recession, as government did in 1949, 1954, 1958, 1960, and under Nixon in 1969. Thus, the nation would be returned once again, perhaps in early 1973, to the dismal downside of the economic seesaw, with the weakest segment of society – the first to be fired – required to sacrifice their welfare for the benefit of a stable price index for us all.

To expose and exploit this vulnerability in the Republican economic position, the Democrats need a position of their own that is different and better. It is primarily their inability to develop one, thus far, that has given the President the initiative and the advantage as reflected in the polls. A more constructive and effective approach to economic stability is available. It involves turning over to the public sector a larger portion of the nation's economic activity than is customary in peacetime. For a growing proportion of the population I think this characteristic may appear as an advantage – especially for those who value purer air and water, better schools and medical care, more attractive cities, recreational areas and countryside, safer streets, more generous concern for the aged, mass

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transportation, adult education, vocational training, day care centers and other services that can best be offered, or can only be offered, by government. Democratic leaders who give lip service to these needs but in legislative practice cling to the middle of the road may be hit by the traffic of history, in this instance a fourth party movement.

At the bottom of the problem of instability is a marked disparity between the structure of the demand for labor and the structure of the available supply. Increasingly, modern technology has required well educated, skilled personnel in industry. Hence a progressively larger proportion of the nation's unskilled workers, who now account for at least 80 percent of the unemployed, have been converted to economic discards. This autumn, unemployment rates were only 2 percent or less for professional employees, technical workers, and administrators, but from 8 to 12 percent for the unskilled and semiskilled. Of course, the jobless always include a significant number of those who have been disadvantaged by special circumstances (such as space engineers and physicists in 1970 and 1971) or by technological change and skill obsolescence. But these, too, are in a sense economic discards, pending retraining or a more productive redirection of their talents. What history teaches is that it is not possible to put the economic discards of either type into jobs simply by pumping up business activity. For when the nation's aggregate demand is vigorously expanded, the scarcity of skilled workers in relation to the needs of industry is intensified, bringing reinforced pressure on wages and salaries and the price level.

At best, during such business expansions, only a relatively small portion of the unskilled and the technologically displaced are absorbed, temporarily, into jobs. Meanwhile, mounting inflation ultimately forces a turnabout in policy, with restraints on the pace of business activity and then deepening unemployment. The year 1969 is a case in point. The overall level of unemployment was pressed down to 3.5 percent of the labor force, and for the highly skilled such as technicians, professionals, or supervisors, the jobless rate was just one percent or less. But for the unskilled the improvement was modest. Even in ebullient 1969, with the still spreading Vietnam War implacably spurring business activity, 7 percent of all nonfarm laborers were out of jobs, a rate that if extended to the entire labor force would have spelled depression. Yet market pressures in general were severe enough to boost the consumer price index by more than 6 percent, and in the middle of the year President Nixon turned on his "game plan" to fight inflation and transform boom into recession.

One important part of the answer to this basic problem is to alter the *structure of the demand* for labor so that the jobless can be put to work without generating inflation. In other words, instead of futilely trying to place square pegs in round holes, we need to shape the holes to fit the pegs. A large number of those who are commonly unemployed – the hard core – cannot be absorbed into jobs in business, except under the most inflationary circumstances, because their aptitudes, whatever they may be, do not fit commercial business needs. But such men and women can make worthwhile contributions to the noncommercial needs of the public sector, and it is with this in mind that the structure of labor demand can be favorably altered. For the public sector – that is, government – is in the unique position of being able to calculate the *social* costs and the *social* benefits of its projects, rather than adhering to purely pecuniary directives. The unemployed remain a cost to society, like the rest of us; even though we are shamefully ungenerous, we do not let them die of hunger or cold.

Hence the cost of employing the jobless in government may be calculated as their salaries *minus* the welfare allowances, unemployment insurance or other benefits that would otherwise maintain them. For government, they represent very low cost labor, and it would pay to put them to work on sorely needed public projects, even in some instances on jobs that in private industry might be performed by machines. As every engineer and efficiency expert knows, there is more than one way to produce practically any good or service. For society, represented by government, it will pay to suit the method to the resources at hand – to the particular skills, aptitudes and training capacity of the unemployed.

My estimate is that if 2½ million of the jobless were employed by government in this way – producing useful public services that are now inadequately supplied, if at all – full employment could be maintained in the United States steadily, and without inflation. Stability in the price level, under these conditions, could be further assured by meeting all the extra expenses of public employment through taxation, so that inflation-inducing excess demand would become a thing of the past. By "extra" expenses, I mean the payroll and material costs of the public employment less the welfare allowances or other public payments the new employees would otherwise have received. I would estimate that net cost – that is, the net tax bill – at probably not more than $6 billion, or about 25 percent less than the Defense Department now spends on research. In return, the nation could look for true economic stability, with no need for recurrent recessions and inflations; a faster rate of long-term growth, since all resources would be used; and a reordering of national priorities that in the past has won the solid sentimental support of the country's orators, but very little money.

This is the heart of the plan that I think Democrats, who have the nation's future as well as their own in mind, ought to be pushing.

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Robert Lewis Shayon on Television

Two Bites of the Apple

It is not too early at this time to take note of two FCC commissioners, both Democrats, whose terms will expire shortly before and after the coming presidential elections – Robert Taylor Bartley (June 30, 1972), and Nicholas Johnson (June 30, 1973). Bob Bartley will retire after 21 years (three terms) on the commission. A Texas populist, Bartley has been strong on monopoly, multiple ownership and undue concentration of control issues (he opposed, along with Commissioners Johnson and Kenneth A. Cox, the ABC-ITT merger). He has been weaker on issues involving access to the airwaves for individuals and groups that invoked the Fairness Doctrine. Unspectacular, preferring to throw his weight quietly behind the scenes, Robert Taylor Bartley deserves a respectful salute as he departs from the regulatory scene.

Nicholas Johnson, on the other hand, would probably welcome reappointment to the FCC for another term; but there seems to be agreement among his friends and enemies that he hasn't a chance. His votes, rhetoric and unjudicial style have irritated the broadcasting industry well beyond the spleen limits formerly set by such public interest commissioners as James Fly, Clifford Durr and Newton Minow. The power of the broadcasters over the images of politicians is considered to be olympian. Political leaders on the Hill and at the White House are reluctant to offend the formidable broadcasters' lobby.

Furthermore, communications lawyers accuse him of "irresponsibility." One lawyer has a file in his office on "Nick Johnson's irresponsibility," to which he adds at least one item each month. Johnson's cosmopolitan commitment to the public interest is conceded, but he is faulted for his disloyalty to the FCC. "He fights for his principles but he takes up too much time doing it at commission meetings," "He wants to be loved," "He doesn't share credit or acknowledge sources," "He's not always intellectually honest when he's off on a crusade" – these are some of the criticisms leveled at him by experts who have watched him in the regulatory arena.

That he has been right on the major issues, even some of his critics don't deny; and his supporters point to the number of times recently that the United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia, has overruled the FCC majority and backed a lone dissent by Commissioner Johnson. In some cases the Court relied on the Commissioner's arguments. *Citizens Communication Center* is a case in point: the District Court aligned itself with dissenter Johnson and overruled the FCC majority's 1970 Policy Statement on comparative hearings involving license renewals. The commission ruled that in a proceeding where a competing applicant challenged the license renewal of an incumbent licensee, the challenger had first to prove that the incumbent had failed substantially to serve the needs of his community. Only if the challenger successfully proved such failure could the hearing examiner then consider the full range of qualifications and proposals of the competing applicants. Because of the difficulty of proving "substantial" failure, in the absence of a rigorous definition of that ambiguous standard, broadcasters were given virtual property rights in their limited franchises. The Citizens Communication Center sought relief from the FCC, and when it was denied, it appealed to the District Court on the position taken by Johnson in his dissent from the FCC's majority decision – namely, that the Policy Statement violated the Communications Act, the First Amendment and federal administrative procedures.

Retail Store Employees is another case in point, involving a Fairness Doctrine issue raised by a union in Ohio that was refused time on a radio station during a strike against a department store. The station continued to carry the store's regular commercials but would not permit the union to broadcast its views of the strike issues. Johnson refused to go along with the majority in accepting the store's reasons for its action. Again, on appeal, the District Court upheld him. In *Business Executives/Democratic National Committee*, a group of businessmen asked WTOP, a Washington station, to sell them airtime for the broadcasting of antiwar commercial spots. The station refused, declaring that its policies precluded the sale of time for editorials. Johnson dissented, asserting that the station had violated the First Amendment, inasmuch as it was "a state agency" by virtue of its government license. He also argued that it was discriminatory of the station to sell time for commercial messages but not for editorial ads. The District Court, when it reversed the FCC majority on appeal, observed that some of Johnson's reasoning was "mechanistic," but it nevertheless supported his dissent. In *Friends of The Earth*, the Appeals Court once more agreed with Johnson in a case involving anti-pollution ads. An environment protection group asked WNBC in New York, under the Fairness Doctrine, to allow it time to reply to product commercials which extolled high-powered cars and high-octane gasoline. WNBC refused, and the FCC (Johnson dissenting) upheld the station, arguing that anti-product ads were restricted to cigarettes. Johnson argued that gasoline pollution was similar to cigarette poisoning – a controversial issue that broadcasters could not ignore.

The judges in these and other cases represent the full spectrum of the District of Columbia Court's conservative and liberal views: even Nixon appointees have backed Johnson's dissents. It is as if this court, which has become a sort of super-FCC, and Commissioner Johnson are both on the same regulatory beam. Johnson, of course, has also voted with the majority in cases where the commission has been upheld by the higher courts. He voted for example with the majority in the celebrated *Red Lion* case, in which the Supreme Court, by a whacking 8-0 decision, affirmed the FCC in turning back a massive attack by industry lawyers on the commission's Fairness Doctrine. In *CBS/Democratic National Committee v. FCC*, a more recent case which was appealed to the District Court, Johnson voted with the commission's majority; but even here there was a large area of agreement between him and the appellate judges. The FCC

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Back Next Week

STANLEY KAUFFMANN's *film and theater page now alternates with commentaries on TV, music and art by various critics.* MR. KAUFFMANN *will also be reviewing books regularly for these pages.*

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Inventiveness and a White Tie

Cole

Edited by Robert Kimball
Introduction by Brendan Gill

(Viking; $25)

"In the roaring traffic's boom/In the silence of my lonely room" is feeble verse by any artistic standards one might find floating around a nobby place like Yale University. "Boom" is not apt except as a rhyme and musical noise, and the combination of "boom" and "roaring" is flabby padding. Also the later information that the lover thinks of his sweetie night and day (in traffic or room) is plain platitudinous romanticizing right out of, yes, tin pan alley. Nobody will take "Night and Day" off the shelf as divine poesy, yet a hundred million or so of us are still around unable to forget its silly lines, or Fred Astaire singing them (to Claire Booth in the play, Ginger Rogers in the movie).

We remember "White Christmas" too, of course, by an even lesser poet. Both Cole Porter and Irving Berlin learned early that to make a tune "catchy" was part luck and part sweat, with the sweat coming from a tight weaving, syllable by syllable, of words, melody and beat, so that the big thud of the thing would come through under almost any conditions, such as a noisy shower. (There are no such tight fittings of words and music any more. Nobody lisps in numbers.) As for the lyrics' message, that had to be clear clear clear, and simple simple simple (with variations). When "Night and Day" hit the best-seller list in 1932 Irving Berlin wrote Cole to say he was "mad" about it, adding, "I think it is your high spot. You probably know it is being played all over, and all the orchestra leaders think it is the best tune of the year." Welcoming Cole into the fold. Was there any difference between whatever it was Cole brought to popular song from Yale (class of 1913), where he loved Robert Browning as William Lyon Phelps had told him to, and what Irving Berlin brought to it from having been, in the words of *Who's Who*, "educated in public schools, NYC, two years only"?

Yes, in many respects there was a terrific class difference. What is surprising is how little that terrific difference came to in terms of other qualities in the songs than manner, tone. Apparently the great American home was (and is) willing to accept highbrow and lowbrow corn with equally indiscriminate enthusiasm. Just keep it corn.

Brendan Gill (Yale, '36) notes in his fine introduction that when Cole came to the Broadway scene first he didn't want to be contaminated by it. Berlin "warned him that if he wanted to get work from theatrical producers he had better acquaint himself with the corner of Broadway and 42nd Street where, if his name was recognized at all in the twenties, he was written off as an expatriate highbrow." But Cole instead rented a "large and costly apartment on Fifth Avenue" that was, "except geographically, . . . even farther from Broadway than Paris and the Lido were." The boy from Peru, Indiana, had not only gone to Yale (where, with the second biggest allowance in his class – there's an exotic bit of data – he made a senior society, was Leader of the Glee Club and a member of the Whiffenpoofs, and of course wrote "Bingo Bingo") but had also married mighty high, and had sailed abroad to join the best expatriate people, and had set up shop as "a sort of gentleman composer, moving at a measured height above the squalid scramble of the market place." The result in the early twenties was that his ambition, which was deep and fervent, was thoroughly frustrated; in 1926 he had in his own words "given up all hope of ever being successful on Broadway" and was living in Venice in the Palazzo Rezzonico, where Robert Browning had died, and creating such a ruckus as an American nouveau that a fashionable Russian complained bitterly: Cole had "started an idiotic night-club on a boat moored outside the Salute. . . . They are teaching the Charleston on Lido Beach! It's dreadful!" Yet only a few years later Cole was fully committed to Broadway shows, being obviously self-concious about the nature of his popularity but hardly disliking it. A now famous letter from Cole to Paul Whiteman in 1937 put Cole's dilemma neatly. He had written a version of "Rosalie" that he liked very much, but Louis B. Mayer found it highbrow. Mayer said, "Forget you are writing for Nelson Eddy and simply give us a good popular song." So Cole angrily did; that is, he rewrote "Rosalie" in the form we now know ("Won't you make my life thrilling/And tell me you're willing/To be mine, Rosalie, mine"), and Mayer was delighted but Cole was not. The song became a hit. When Irv-

The Wedlock

My breast waited
shy as a clam
until you came,
Mr. Firecracker,
Mr. Panzer-man.
You with your pogo stick,
you with your bag full of jokes.
At the corner of your eyes,
little incisions,
smile wrinkles that tell and tell.
When I shout *help* in my dream
you fold me in like a slipper its foot.

Suppertime I float toward you
from the stewpot
holding poems you shrug off
and you kiss me like an orange.
All that zing and zap
and an ounce of gentleness
and when anger comes
like a finger in a light socket,
you of the Karate chop,
you of the Tommy Gun,
force me downwards like a stone.

But seldom now am I your punching bag.
Most days I'm curled like a spotted dog
at your elbow, Panzer-man
When I'm crazy you bring me
a single yellow rose to come home by.
Home is our spy pond pool in the backyard,
the willow with its spooky yellow fingers
and the great orange bed where we lie
like two paintings in a field of poppies.

ANNE SEXTON

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ing Berlin congratulated him Cole said, "Thanks a lot, but I wrote that song in hate and I still hate it." Berlin replied, "Listen, kid, take my advice, never hate a song that has sold a half million copies."

Whatever the merits of that immortal moral it seems useless to worry about some high seriousness in Cole that was knocked on the head by the world's Louis B. Mayers. What Cole was truly serious about was not being serious. At least there is no evidence in the book that Cole had grander aims than the songs we have. By grander I do not mean artier but meatier. His art, given the demands of musical comedy, big bands and big box office, is not to be scorned, and wherever one touches it it is of a high order of precision and sophistication; but it remains a thematically empty art, an art insistently blind, for example, to trouble around it – Cole's own or America's. It is like a circus band playing furiously while the tent burns. How Hollywood and Broadway have managed to march along in their musical comedies for so long, especially through the thirties, with so little to say is a sociological problem of some moment, but for Cole that emptiness became a happy context for his inventiveness – and also, one may guess, a way of spiritual survival. "You're the Top" is the most extravagant instance available of where his horsepower went, with its sixty gorgeously-rhymed tropes about tophood ("You're a rose/You're Inferno's Dante/You're the nose/On the great Durante," etc.), but all the songs have the same primary formula. It worked and worked.

Early in his career, before the great machinery of show-writing gobbled him up, one can detect a little devil occasionally driving him to comments beyond the musical-rhetorical gamesmanship that became his life. For instance at Yale he once wrote an angry short piece on the banalities of New Haven's then new Taft Hotel and there is also a song – comic but toughly comic – about the literary snobbery of Yale's Elizabethan Club. But in general his aim was to fit sparklers to platitude, not rock the boat. He was a genius at it, yet to see all the lyrics of his famous songs sitting in a row in these pages is to be struck by how mechanically at last his talent fulfilled this destiny.

Brendan Gill has nightmares about the unchangingness of Cole's face, from childhood on through the good years to the years of suffering (he was terribly injured in 1937); and in this he sees a key to Cole's character: the child in him remained in the ascendant throughout, so that he brought to the grave "not the ravaged face of an old man but the ravaged face of a young one." Add to this another kind of unchangingness – a persistence of tone, an insistence on always looking gay, untroubled, urbane even when in mortal trouble – and one gets the impression of a mask that became a man.

It is a beautiful non-book, so good that maybe non-books should now be admitted into the sanctum of book-books; it is a sort of biography kit with which each reader, guided by Gill's introduction and the careful collatings of editor Robert Kimball (who must also be Yale, class of something, for this is a Yale bag) can put together his own Cole Porter with appropriate personal shadings of approval or disapproval, depending on such matters as the reader's age, college, favorite bands and dance steps. And it is also, I think, a striking book to be confronted with in the seventies, when most of the worlds over which Cole presided – and anyone over 40 or 50 will admit that he presided over a lot – seem to have vanished. Cole was a beautiful specimen of a rather special kind of determined hedonism in life and art. Deeply built into his views was the notion that if you went out to dance and sing you went out to dance and sing. You turned off the social relevance, the troubles in office, home and heart, and you did the Charleston. It was a serious view, and it had its adherents all through the jazz age and into the swing age. If Cole, because of his commitment to musical comedy and other frivolities, seems now more brittle and less-to-be-reckoned with than Hemingway, say, or Edna St. Vincent Millay, he is nonetheless a wholly serious phenomenon in the American past, perhaps the more serious ultimately because he *did* write brittle little songs all his life rather than novels and throaty sonnets. His commitment was total to what our new earnestness must inevitably think of as merely evasion. To put Tom Lehrer or Bob Dylan up against Cole is to sense the difference. Have we gotten better?

The ways of emptiness are many. Cole's life may seem now in part a tragedy because a self seems to have gotten lost somehow and somewhere between the joke-rhymes; certainly an outsider is hard-pressed to know, looking at what Cole left behind, what Cole's heart belonged to beside the daddy of his genre. And yet the hundred million of us who have partaken of him late drunk happy unhappy in movie playhouse dance hall must have found *something* there, something primal, something beyond the white tie and tails and fixed Fred-Astaire smile that now seem, in our serious world, snobbery, evasion, all the bad things. Personally I think the something will turn out finally to be the gayety, the genuine joy in the songs. I think they are primal in their energy, in the *urgency* of their singing life, past the money and mechanics. I think they do add life to life way down.

My four-year-old wanted to dance to all Cole's songs the other night and I took that as a good sign. I gather from Brendan Gill's introduction that he too doesn't know quite what to make of the complications of the Cole legend, but he ends flatly with an extravagance perhaps sentimental but wholly appropriate to the extravagance that was Cole himself: "the face and the voice and the songs are one and they will never grow old, never die." A wonderful book.

Reed Whittemore

Saying Goodbye

We kissed in the car in
the Howard Johnson parking lot
while the french fries, pale
as erasers in the take-out box,
oiled each other's wet sides
and the bland magnesia milkshake
belched secretly under its straws.
The slats of the aqua cupola
were sharply watchful.
A thin sleet salted the orange roof.

At that time a swollen woman,
her hair in pink snakes heavier
than Medusa's, cornered herself
in the phone booth and worked
at the holes of the dial.
She spoke. Her alarm was a dumbshow
of large gestures and she heaved
herself out as from an execution
and started down the state highway,
the young girl inside her running.

The telephone dangled on its cord,
hapless as a shoe swayed by its laces,
and the howler signal sang
until it entered our own mouths.

MAXINE KUMIN

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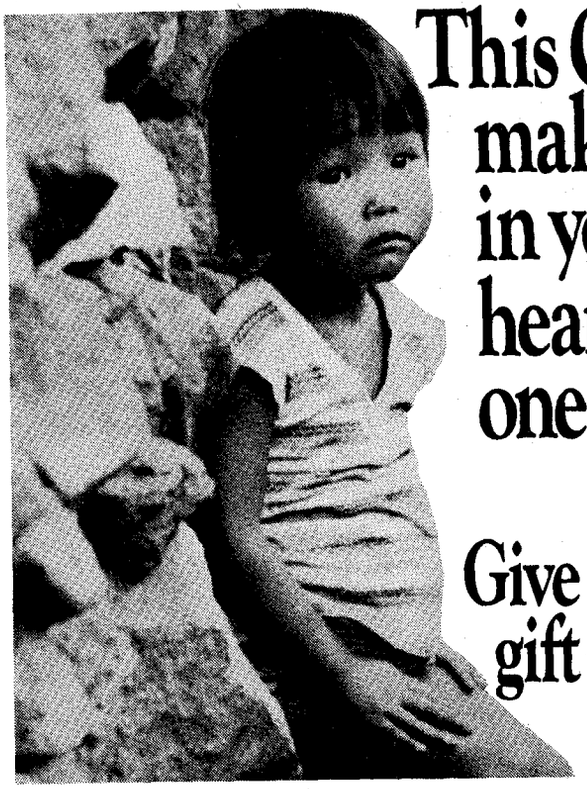
Notable

The Affluent Suburb:
Princeton
by George S. Sternlieb,
Robert William Burchell,
and Lynne Beyer Sagalyn
(Transaction Books; $9.75)

This is the book that was banned in Princeton – only temporarily, however, and not because of the raciness of its subject matter. The Princeton Regional Planning Board commissioned a study of housing in this most posh community, then refused to allow the authors to publish the results as a book until they (the planning board) released the information themselves. A Trenton paper billed it as another Pentagon Papers caper.

The authors are George Sternlieb (director of the Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Studies and author of *The Tenement Landlord*) and two research associates. They have produced a well-researched, copiously documented study of almost every aspect of housing in Princeton: Who lives where? What housing is available? Who are the underhoused? What about housing for the elderly, young marrieds, and municipal employees? For the student, public official, planner, or sociologist, the book is full of valuable techniques, methods, questionnaires, and approaches for studying housing. But for the general reader the book is dry, limp. It is full of tables and maps and percentage points. It has no sense of life, and seems to relegate the people of Princeton to the status of figures on a chart. It is a technical report sandwiched between hard covers with a snappy title up front. A ring binder would have sufficed. For vitality, insight, and good writing, the book ranks a miserable second to another book about a less highbrow New Jersey town, Willingboro: *The Levittowners*, by Herbert Gans.

Not only is it dull; it ends without giving the reader any idea of what can be done about Princeton's housing problem, or how other affluent communities might tackle the problem. The authors claim that policy making is not their job; they just supply the data. The average reader fortunately pays only $9.75 to find that out. The town fathers of Princeton paid $15,000.



This Christmas make room in your heart for one more.

Give the gift of life!

This happy Christmas season is the time for peace on earth and good will towards men. It's a time for gifts and the warmth of family and friends. It's a time that's as fragile as a snowflake...a time that melts into memory all too soon.

It is also a time when the utter despair of people living in desperate poverty becomes more painful. Because they are the hopeless ones, the forgotten ones, in remote villages and barrios of Asia and South America. Human beings whose only chance to live like human beings may be through the help of Foster Parents Plan—*and you.*

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DISSENT

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SIMON AND SCHUSTER

In Pursuit of Relevance
by Herbert J. Muller

(Indiana University Press; $10)

In a collection of thirty-four essays Herbert Muller looks back over his life as scholar, teacher, writer and citizen, and meditates on his and his culture's values. He ponders America's seediness, and the diminished (but he thinks still crucial) role of history. He clings with many reservations to a notion of progress (but rejoices in the knowledge that he "will not live to see the year 2000"). He reconsiders various important persons in his intellectual life such as de Toqueville and William James, and reflects with a lofty liberal's sense of irony about the morality of our leaders. He is a patriot to the roots, but one notes without surprise that he is now spending more and more of his time in Mexico.

Rascals at Large, or, The Clue in the Old Nostalgia
by Arthur Prager

(Doubleday; $6.95)

An author setting out to cope with such marvelous subjects as the Bobbsey Twins, Royer Boys, Tom Swift, Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew and Tarzan has to work hard to let us down. Arthur Prager does.

He has no thesis. His method is to quote some of the more ridiculous passages in novel after novel, note they are racist, hawkish, prudish, or mildly pornographic, then move on to another example. Not an analysis or even a collection, the book is a heap. The Tarzan novels attracted Prager as a boy because their setting was Africa and because their scenes included de-bloused white flesh. But then there was no sniff of sex in the Bobbsey Twins' adventures, hardly a bed appeared in Tom Swift, hardly a blouse (when they appear, they're buttoned).

Because he read over 400 different children's series novels, Prager surely qualifies as a national resource, a kind of Smithsonian of pop culture. But he's a Smithsonian with no catalogue. The usual assumption is that popular art will reveal the tastes and manners, the social and psychological relations, of its creators and consumers. Prager is not interested in such assumptions; not arguing for or against them, his implication is that kids are all different, that there is no point in trying to find similarity in the soft porn of Tarzan and the ammoniac well-lighted place that is a Nancy Drew story. Prager's way of putting it has discrete authors and discrete publishers as entrepreneurs doing their discrete things; a more serious book would have shown how these novels were or were not contributive to a pattern of social hegemony. He might also have asked, since he had the information, how the children's novel industry related to, say, the present children's TV industry. There are striking parallels. The Nancy Drew, Bobbsey Twins, Hardy Boys, Tom Swift, Rover Boys, and many other less known series books all had one author: Edward Stratemeyer. At first working in his tobacco store, Stratemeyer conceived them all, over 800 novels in this one lode, before he died and left the Stratemeyer Syndicate to his daughter, Harriet S. Adams, who still turns them out anew and rewrites the old. Before Stratemeyer's day, Horatio Alger, Jr. composed 119 children's novels single-handedly (and these Prager does not even deal with). But it was Stratemeyer who best anticipated the centralized and sophisticated techniques of Hollywood and TV with his assembly-line staff filling in plot outlines to keep several novels rolling out every week, all on an eight-to-five schedule.

An Osborn Festival of Phobias
by Robert Osborn, with text by Eve Wengler

(Liveright; $6.95)

The phobias modern man already has, but he needs new names and images for them if he is to keep up intellectually with his own decline from peace and sanity. Robert Osborn, assisted by Eve Wengler, provides them in an amusing collection of cartoons to accompany such well-known conditions as Odontiatrophobia (fear of dentists), Doxophobia (fear of opinions), and Autophobophobia (fear of one's own fears).

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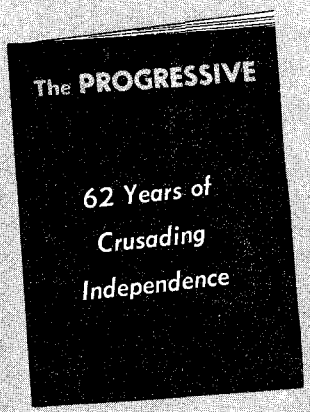

If you had been reading

The Progressive

recently, these are a few of the fine articles you would have found rewarding . . .

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Richard Falk

BIOLOGICAL WARFARE: SILENT DEATH
Seymour Hersh

LIBERALS AND THE NEW LEFT
James A. Wechsler

THE TAX LOOPHOLE SCANDAL
Senator William Proxmire

TURMOIL IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
John C. Cort

MOVIES, MORALS AND THE YOUNG
Richard Shickel

THE PROFITS IN POLLUTION
Ralph Nader

LIBERALS AND THE BLACK REVOLUTION
Charles V. Hamilton

A SCANDAL CALLED WELFARE
Morris K. Udall

CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S 'NEW COMMUNISM'
Milton Mayer

WOMEN'S LIB ON CAPITOL HILL
Judith Nies McFadden

JAPAN: THE OLD GANG IS BACK
Jeffrey P. Freed

THE GREAT DRUG EDUCATION HOAX
Dr. Seymour Halleck

WHAT STUDENTS CAN DO FOR PEACE
Senator J. W. Fulbright

THE AUTO REPAIR SCANDAL
Erwin Knoll

POVERTY & HEALTH: LEGACY OF NEGLECT
Selig Greenberg

WHO ARE THE BLACK PANTHERS?
Nora Sayre

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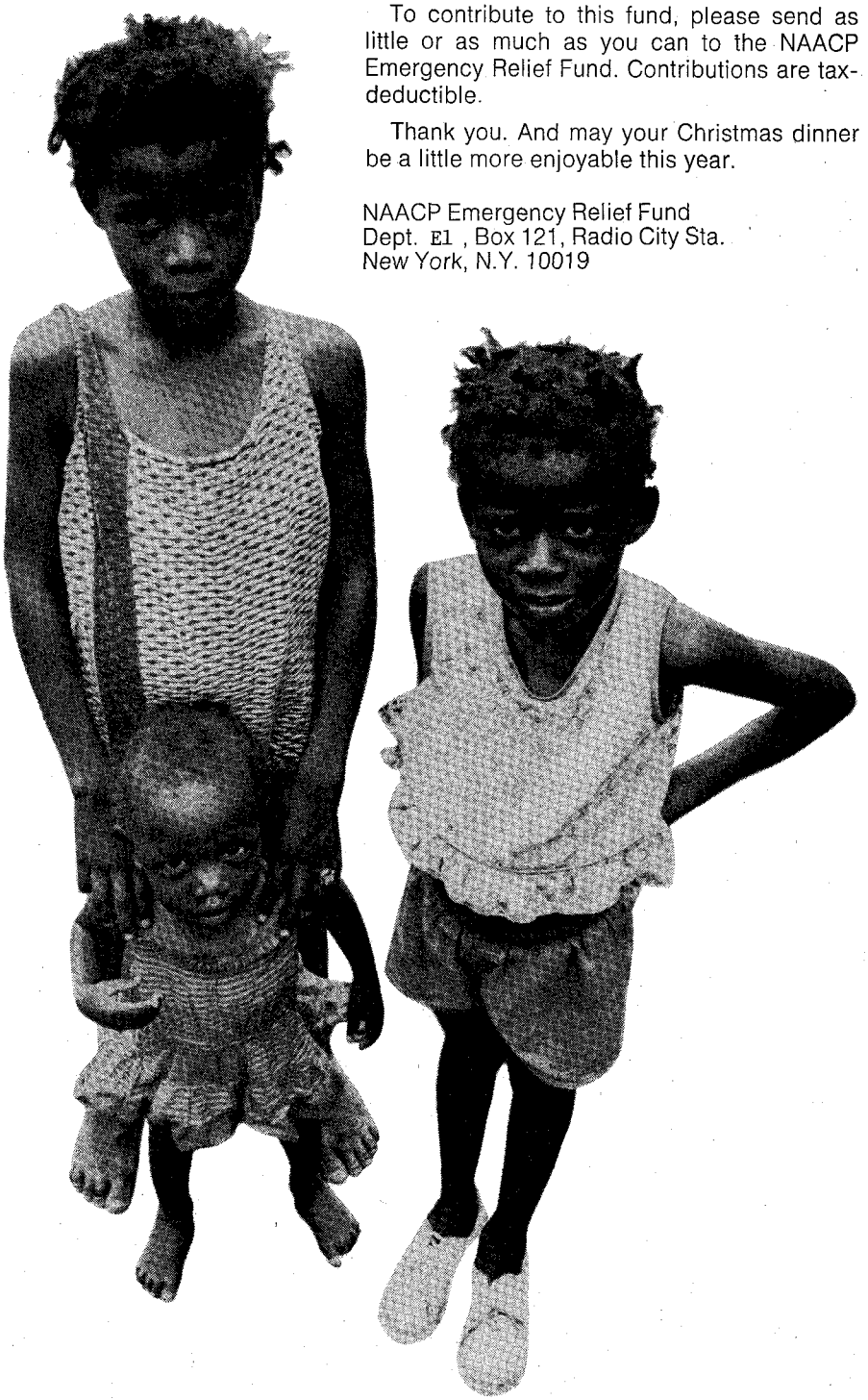

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To contribute to this fund, please send as little or as much as you can to the NAACP Emergency Relief Fund. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Thank you. And may your Christmas dinner be a little more enjoyable this year.

NAACP Emergency Relief Fund
Dept. E1 , Box 121, Radio City Sta.
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Professor's Daughter by Piers Paul Read

(Lippincott; $6.95)

The daughter is aimless, full of boredom and unfocussed tensions for the first half of the novel; the novel lacks direction for the same period. Then she joins a group of students in her father's college seminar who are plotting a political assassination that, they theorize, will trigger revolution. The novel's pace picks up quickly. Piers Paul Read is a young writer to watch. He handles narrative and dialogue with skill, and deals cogently with big issues of the current scene. He sometimes wavers between melodrama (where he is strong) and classroom dialectic (where he is intelligent but naive), and seems therefore undecided whether he wants to write what Graham Greene used to call "entertainments," or to set up shop as an earnest novelist of theme and character; but at either he should do very well.

Beyond Saying

"I have nothing to say and I am saying
it and that is poetry."
– John Cage, *Silence*

Beyond saying.
Gorky chalked
"Good-bye, my loveds" on the wall
in his suicide note.
He understood the past tense.
Everything is
beyond saying.

Touch me.
Please.

Speak
to my skin.

NANCY SULLIVAN

Coming:
Malcolm Cowley
discusses
Memoirs of Montparnasse

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Reconsiderations

Progress and Poverty

When *Progress and Poverty* was first published by Appleton in 1880, it became a worldwide best-seller almost at once. Reviewers hailed it as one of the most remarkable books of the century. Newspapers ran portions of it as a serial. Cheap paperback editions were printed in both America and England. Foreign editions were published in more than a dozen languages. Within a few years more than two million copies of the book had been sold, and many more than that number of people were familiar with its ideas. Henry George's popularity was such that, when the Labor Party drafted him in 1886 to run for mayor of New York City, he finished second in a three-way race, outpolling Theodore Roosevelt but losing to the Tammany candidate. When George died a decade later in the heat of another New York mayoralty campaign, more than a hundred thousand people passed his bier to pay respect, and the funeral procession through the city streets was compared to Lincoln's.

Yet such are the vagaries of intellectual fame that Henry George today is little more than a footnote in the history and economics texts. When he is remembered at all it is as a single-taxer, a semi-crackpot with a magic cure-all for society's ills. His name is magic only in the dozen or so Henry George schools that have sprung up to perpetuate George's teachings.

This is a great pity, for *Progress and Poverty* is a monumental work that deals only briefly with the single tax. No other economics book that I have read possesses the lucidity, grace or compassion of George's classic. And while there are faults in George's reasoning, and much of what he says has been blunted by the passage of time, what strikes the modern reader is how extremely pertinent this book remains.

The fundamental question posed in *Progress and Poverty* is as the title implies: Why, in the midst of ever-growing plenty, does poverty persist and indeed flourish? Why, "amid the greatest accumulations of wealth, do men die of starvation, and puny infants suckle dry breasts?" This paradox, while worldwide, is nowhere more evident than in the United States, where "almshouses and prisons are as surely the marks of 'material progress' as are costly dwellings, rich warehouses, and magnificent churches." On the American frontier, George observed, there was neither great wealth nor grinding poverty; all men worked hard and were rewarded with material blessings in approximately equal proportion. Yet as industry progressed and cities rose, so too did the disparity of income and opportunity. New York, the greatest city of all, swarmed with paupers, and San Francisco, where George was a printer and newspaperman, was not far behind. Far from alleviating human want, material progress was augmenting it. "It is as though an immense wedge were being forced, not underneath society, but through society. Those who are above the point of separation are elevated, but those who are below are crushed down."

To discover and then eradicate the root cause of this phenomenon was, for George, the paramount task of political economy. Clearly, he reasoned, the cause must lie somewhere in the mechanics of the distribution of wealth. At about the same time that Karl Marx was placing the blame on the expropriation by capitalists of the surplus value of labor, George's analysis was leading to a different conclusion.

His basic argument can be briefly summarized. Wealth is produced by a combination of three factors: land, capital and labor, the returns on each being, respectively, rent, interest and wages. As the productive capacities of labor and capital increase, so too does the value of the land upon which they must operate. Rent (defined as payment for the use of bare land, as opposed to

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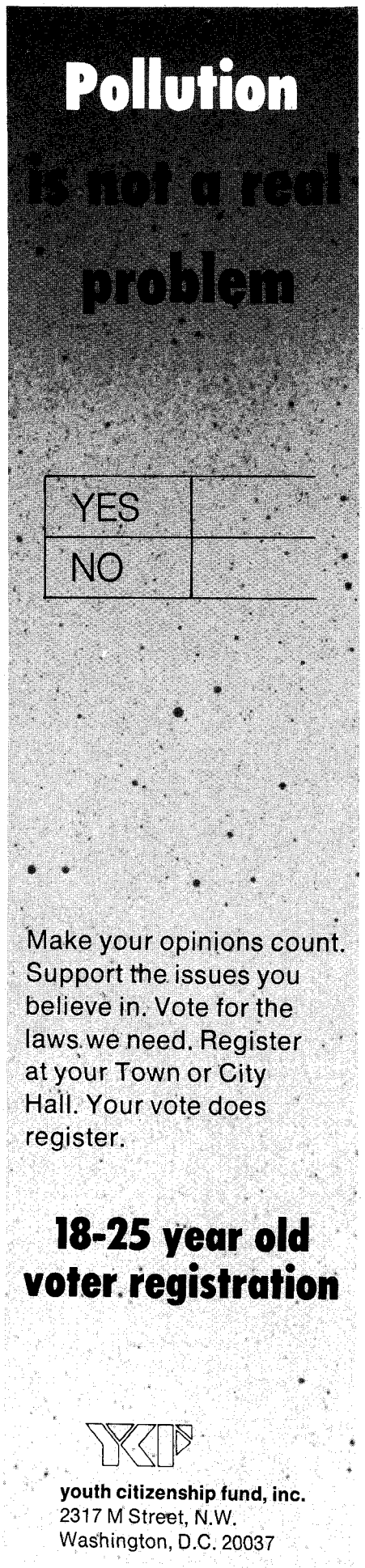
Progress and Poverty
by Henry George

(Originally published by Appleton, 1880. Now available from Modern Library; $2.95.)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payment for the use of buildings) therefore rises as fast as wages and interest. Indeed, rent rises so fast that it swallows up all increases in the value of production, thus making landowners, rather than workers or capitalists, the sole (and wholly undeserving) beneficiaries of progress. "The great cause of the inequality in the distribution of wealth is inequality in the ownership of land," George concluded, and this led inexorably toward his famous remedy – the transformation, through a tax on rent, of individual land ownership into common land ownership.

George's economic reasoning was buttressed by an excursion into the realm of social ethics, much of which is strikingly resonant with what ecologists are saying today. The only private property that is legitimate, he contended, is that which is the product of labor; as a man belongs to himself, so his labor, when put in concrete form, belongs to him and no other. The gifts of nature, on the other hand, are given to all indiscriminately, and no man has a right to possess what is equally the birthright of his fellows. When, because of population growth or the advance of civilization, a particular piece of land or natural resource rises in market value, that rise is not the result of any one man's exertions, and cannot rightfully be appropriated by any one man. To tax that rise in value – indeed to confiscate it – is therefore just; to tax the fruit of a man's labor, while sometimes necessary, is essentially unjust.

George's economic reasoning has flaws. While for example, *some* increase in the value of production is appropriated by the owners of land, *all* of it is not thusly stolen. Private land ownership is not the only cause of poverty amidst plenty, and taxation of land values, while reasonable and just, cannot by itself bring abundance to all.

And yet, despite these and other weaknesses in George's arguments, and despite the flood of economic writing we have had in this century, I am convinced that American economic thought has, in a most important respect, regressed since *Progress and Poverty*. The great fascination of latter-day American economics has not been the laws of distribution of wealth; it has been, to use the fancy term, macroeconomics: the national-scale problems of growth, inflation and unemployment, and how to use government policies to control them. The present mechanisms for distributing wealth within the total economy are accepted almost worshipfully. All that is necessary, says the conventional economic wisdom, is to iron out the business cycle and increase GNP; income distribution will then take care of itself, mainly through the trickle-down process. If, for any reason, some Americans don't get themselves aboard the gravy train, they can be kept alive (barely) through welfare.

The failure of modern economics to question the distributive system has been accompanied by a parallel brainwashing of the general public. In George's day, millions knew the underlying cause of poverty was not Americans' unwillingness to toil, but the fact that Robber Barons were squeezing every possible penny out of the hides of working men. Today the monopolists are subtler, the unions stronger, and Madison Avenue more ingenious. The Horatio Alger myth, with all its corollaries, is more firmly entrenched than ever. It's not the system that creates economic inequality, says the myth, it's personal inadequacies: lack of education, sloth, a defective family structure. Improve the individual and you eliminate poverty. Henry George disposed of such theories swiftly: "If one man work harder, or with superior skill or intelligence than ordinary, he will get ahead; but if the average of industry, skill, or intelligence be brought to the higher point, the increased intensity of application will secure but the old rate of wages, and he who would get ahead must work harder still. . . . The fallacy is similar to that which would be involved in the assertion that every one of a number of competitors might win a race. That *any* might is true; that *every* one might is impossible."

When the War on Poverty arrived in the early 1960s and raised the same question posed by George in 1880, it came up with all the wrong answers: give "them," the poor, job training; give others, the bureaucrats, jobs; but don't for a moment tamper with the tax laws or anything that might fundamentally alter the distributive system. Now, five years from the date proclaimed by Sargent Shriver as the millenium by which all poverty was to disappear, there are more poor people in America than before the War on Poverty began.

The great wonder is not that American economists have failed to resolve the poverty-amidst-plenty enigma (for it is a highly cure-resistant paradox) but that they have so easily been diverted from the quest. I am certain that Henry George, were he alive today, would not be nearly so complacent. It outraged him in 1880 that "New York alone spends over seven million dollars a year" on official charity; imagine his sense of injustice today! Perhaps, in surveying our high-technology economy, he would perceive the insufficiency of his land value tax approach; perhaps not. In any case he would assuredly be asking the right questions.

American interest in *Progress and Poverty* ought to revive. Some vital questions might then be reinjected into the economic debate in this country – questions such as whether land, and even capital, are public resources, and thus ought not to be monopolized for the profit of a few; whether income earned through labor ought to be taxed at the same rate as income not so earned (thanks to the capital gains and other loopholes, labor-earned income is currently taxed at an even higher rate than income gained through manipulation of capital and land); and where, in the entire economic system, the diversions occur that prevent an equitable distribution of wealth.

It has not been fashionable of late for economists to poke at the inner workings of our system, or to evince the passion and compassion Henry George did. That is another reason why *Progress and Poverty* deserves to be revived: it could help make American economics the essentially humane and radical discipline it ought to be. In his preface to *Progress and Poverty*, George

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

MAXINE KUMIN's *new novel,* The Abduction, *will be published this winter by Harper & Row.* ANNE SEXTON's *most recent book is* Transformations *(Houghton Mifflin).* ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON *is a contributing TV-radio editor for* Saturday Review *and professor of communications at The Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania.* NANCY SULLIVAN *is the author of* History of the World as Pictures *(University of Missouri).*

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wrote that what he tried to do was to reconcile the *laissez faire* ideals of liberty and individualism with the socialist goal of economic justice – as he put it, "to unite the truth perceived by the school of Smith and Ricardo to the truth perceived by the schools of Proudhon and Lasalle." Ninety years later that remains an unfinished task. American political economy should get on with it.

Peter Barnes

Correspondence

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Leon Botstein
President, Franconia College

Author Replies

Sirs:

In the October, 1971, issue of *College English*, Professor Wallace G. Gober writes,

> I would like to recommend that the editors of College English establish a Most Inept Review Ever award (MIRE) and give it to Wayne A. O'Neil for his sophomoric attack on S. B. Greenfield's MLA MVE (Most Valuable Essay) '68 essay in CE, December '70. One could forgive O'Neil's tone of mocking condescension – normal bad manners for an MIT smartass – if his discussion of the essay in question were accurate and productive.

And further on: "Slanted quoting, biased interpretation, and simple misrepresentation of fact are typical of O'Neil's approach throughout this 'review'"....

Heavy, Professor Gober, very heavy; how could one of our bright young scholars be guilty of such scholarly misbehavior? You are being churlish. Unkind. Unreasonable. Ah, well, it's just, after all, another tempest in the academic teacup.

Easy it is to dismiss the conflicts of others! Then, in *The New Republic*, November 20, I (through my book *The Creative Classroom*) am O'Neil's victim. And, by golly, there he is, precisely as Gober says, laying on the slanted quotes, the biased interpretation, the misrepresentation of fact. In short, playing the smartass. Indeed, I find the NR review so gross a misrepresentation of the book that I wonder whether O'Neil really read it. (We know how easy it is to "review" a book unread, a movie unseen, etc.)

At any rate, it is plain that (for whatever reasons) O'Neil preferred not to review my book but an invention of his own called *The Creative Classroom*. On the single concrete issue that he contrives his condemnation, namely, my brief treatment of the Initial Teaching Alphabet, I refer the reader to pp. 130-31 of my book. Nowhere do I "close" a discussion of the ITA as a teaching device (except by virtue of going to other educational matters). But, of course, it is convenient for O'Neil to pretend that I do, for that allows him to zing off a flashy attack against my presumed position. And there is nothing quite so much fun for the book reviewer as a flashy attack. It's a lot more fun, to be sure, when the attack is warranted and not simply a casuistical exercise. The extent to which O'Neil belabors what in the book is but a very small point, incidentally, would lead the reader of the review to conclude that *The Creative Classroom* (i.e., my CC) is a book about spelling. It isn't. It is a practical program for education. I find it hard to grasp how O'Neil managed to so thoroughly misconceive the book. It surely took an act of will!

Henry F. Beechhold
Hunter College, New York

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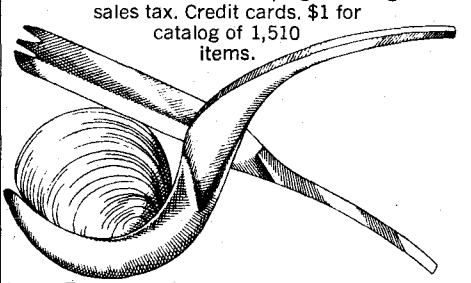
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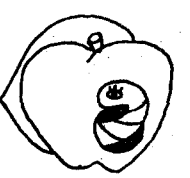

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Reconsidered

Sirs:

Having just completed a screenplay on the life of Emma Goldman, and admiring her deeply, I'm unhappy about the subtle animus that I think pervades Kenneth S. Lynn's "Reconsideration" of her autobiography, "Living My Life." Lynn's tendency – it's no more than that; clearly he feels considerable admiration for the woman – is to suggest that knowing the psychology of a radical is tantamount to knowing the causes for his or her social protest (with "psychology" usually equated with the pathological elements in the individual's experience).

Thus Lynn finds it "unmistakably clear" that Emma Goldman's "political militancy was rooted in sexual resentment" – specifically, resentment against a volatile, sometimes brutal father. That *aspect* of her experience is indeed "unmistakably clear," but the link between it and a life in radical politics makes for far too simplistic an equation. Not only does it ignore many other aspects of her experience, but also the historical context in which she lived, and the desperate social inequalities she found everywhere around her. The social ills she encountered *warranted* radical protest and must themselves be included in any "explanation" of Emma Goldman's activities. It may be that the question really begging for explanation, given the squalor of American life, is not why Emma Goldman spoke out, but why so few others did. Lynn sees her concern over the legal lynching of the Haymarket anarchists as "obsessive"; it could be as easily argued that the indifference of most Americans was pathological. Lynn sees her complicity in the attempted assassination of Henry Clay Frick as proof positive that she was "completely out of touch with the realities of American life"; it could be as easily argued that she was so closely in touch with them and so frustrated by their immutability, that violence, momentarily, seemed the only available path to change.

Conservatives have long used psychology as a convenient weapon for devaluing the commitment of radicals to social causes: "look to their inner turmoil and you'll find sufficient explanation for their public protests." By that rationale, the social conditions against which the protest is directed need hardly be considered – though those conditions may be far more crucial to a radical's "experience" than, say, "sexual resentment."

Martin Duberman
Professor of History,
Lehman College, CUNY

Sirs:

I know it is in vain that I write to an editor of a magazine with only three women on its masthead, none of which has an editorially responsible position, to protest that you have once again published a review of a book written by and about an important woman, namely Emma Goldman, by a man, with all the traditional prejudices of a man about the sexuality of women. Kenneth S. Lynn makes it clear once again that it's all right to fight for liberty if you're a woman, but it will never be all right to live your private life as you see fit, to recognize the sexual needs of one's own body and then go about satisfying them. Once again women are made to understand that there is only one respectable course open to them: chastity until marriage, and one marriage with complete fidelity to spouse until death. Will you and Mr. Lynn please reflect for an instant on how he would have described the sexual life of Emma Goldman, if she had been a man; would a man have added other lovers to his "stable"; would a man have "bedded-down" with a lover; is a man ever promiscuous?

Judith Trenholme
Montclair, New Jersey

Sirs:

Mr. Lynn's review of Emma Goldman's Biography omits one striking event – her unhappy sojourn in Soviet Russia. While he emphasizes that she was deported from the United States he fails to mention that her destination was the Soviet Union. An even more grievous omission is the fact that she found life in the Soviet Union so intolerable that she escaped to Canada. . . . To attribute her magnificent impatience with persecution and oppression to repressed "sexuality" is a most questionable procedure. Is idealism nothing more than an affair of the instincts?

Theodore N. Lewis
Brooklyn, New York

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TRB

Sirs:

I am sure others were as startled as I to find TRB nodding as he does (Nov. 27) in lumping J. M. Keynes with Alfred Marshall and Adam Smith as one who thought "that the law of supply and demand would ultimately regulate prices and jobs in the market place." In the same vein one might lump Freud with witch-doctors and Einstein with the president of the Flat Earth Society.

Of course Keynes handsomely acknowledged his debt to the classical economists, and especially Alfred Marshall, but he did not share their innocence about "supply and demand" – not, at least, at the time of the *General Theory.*

I sympathize with TRB. For now that President Nixon has declared himself a Keynesian, it might be inferred that the century's greatest economist has become all things to all men. But not quite, TRB, not quite!

Edwin M. Yoder Jr.
Greensboro, North Carolina

Wage-Price freeze

Sirs:

Your note "Where the Shoe Pinches" (Nov. 20) seems to be unduly critical of the President's stabilization program. The point you stress is that the freeze in wages in Phase 1 and the permissible increase of 5 percent in Phase 2 are unjust to labor. You expected more reasonable guidelines of control and were disappointed.

I suppose one could argue endlessly over the "fairness" of the wage and price guidelines. Workers who received their wage increases before the cut-off point – August 15 – undoubtedly benefited from their good fortune as compared with those whose wages were frozen. But there had to be some fixed date on which the stabilization program would take effect. Suppose the cut-off

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date was September 15 or October 15, would we not face the same unanswerable question? Phase 2 does, in fact, allow some leeway in the approval of retroactive payments. But even if it did not, the argument that labor is being cheated falls apart. If prices are stable, a fixed wage is worth that much more to the laborer as consumer. And if the President's economic plan works, employment will rise, since American goods will be more marketable at home and abroad. If Labor insists on all its contractual gains, the vicious cycle of rising costs and soaring prices will get under way once more.

It is futile to try to persuade labor leaders that the interests of their members would be best served in the long run by the acceptance of restraints. Labor leaders themselves are not free agents, for they must be responsive to the wishes of the rank and file of their constituent membership, and they know their members would turn a deaf ear to counsels of moderation. The average worker understands the logic of more dollars in his pay envelope today more readily than he can grasp the niceties of economic theory. Under these circumstances, it seems probable that the stabilization plan is foredoomed to failure, not so much by George Meany's hostility to Mr. Nixon as by a widespread lack of understanding of how our economic system works.

Alfred T. Vogel
New York, New York

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Shayon, *from page 22*

had ordered CBS, in this case, to provide free time, under the Fairness Doctrine, to the Republican National Committee to reply to a reply by the Democratic National Committee to a series of Vietnam speeches by President Nixon.

The District Court has spanked the FCC for high-handed procedure in the past, but the slap this time was the toughest yet. Circuit Court Judges J. Skelly Wright, Edward A. Tamm and Spottswood W. Robinson III rebuked the FCC for giving the Republicans "two bites of the apple." The FCC majority had changed its position four times, the judges said, and had dealt with the facts in "a notably shoddy fashion." It had been "capricious, arbitrary and inconsistent." Judge Tamm, in a separate concurring opinion, charged the FCC with taking "a political role of interference contrary to all of the teachings of administrative decision-making." Johnson had gone along with the majority on this particular case only because his vote was needed on a package of cases involving other Fairness Doctrine issues. He had done so, he said, without enthusiasm and with extreme reluctance. He had stated his serious misgivings about the power of the President to command television time. The District Court echoed his warning. "If the words and views of the President become a monolithic force," the Court wrote, "if they constitute not just the most powerful voice in the land but the only voice, then the delicate mechanism through which an enlightened public opinion is distilled, far from being strengthened, is thrown dangerously off balance. Public opinion becomes not informed and enlightened, but instructed and dominated."

Concluding his concurring opinion in the *CBS/ Democratic National Committee* majority opinion, Johnson made a characteristic comment that could hardly have endeared him to the White House, which appoints FCC Commissioners. He noted that press reports had suggested that "the White House staff in fact worked with Chairman Burch's office in preparing his response to the press coverage of the FCC's decision." "For the White House staff to have participated in any way in this proceeding," he added, "or in the encouragement of preparation of 'interpretative' opinions, would make a mockery of the independence of an agency which is the creature and arm of Congress – even though there is no question of a violation of the letter of our *ex parte* contact rules in this instance. . . . And yet, one cannot help but wonder where else one could so rapidly obtain such a thorough analysis of the nation's newspaper coverage of the President – including accounts in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, *Chicago Today*, and *Chicago Sun-Times*, none of which appeared in the FCC's internal newspaper reporting service, or are from papers prominently displayed on the Chairman's coffee table."

It is an anomaly bordering on absurdity that so public-spirited an FCC Commissioner cannot be reappointed: but 1973 is still a year and a half away. Before a less activist member of the commission replaces him, however, Johnson may be expected to perform in characteristic fashion on a number of important issues, including cable tv, children's television, the Fairness Doctrine inquiry, media crossownership in specific markets, changes in renewal standards and proceedings, and in specific renewal and transfer cases.

As to the question of the President's overwhelming advantage in access to the airwaves, the District Court's reversal of the FCC doesn't get to the heart of the problem. Granted that the party in office cannot have "the second bite of the apple" (the right to reply to the loyal opposition's reply), there remains still the impossibility of fairness when the President can command at any time all three networks for a simultaneous, live, uninterrupted address to the electorate. Time granted the opposition on a single network cannot in any manner effectively balance a three network, highly publicized presentation. The Democrats understand this, but one wonders how long they will wait before they muster enough courage to demand a simultaneous, three network, live right of reply to the President.

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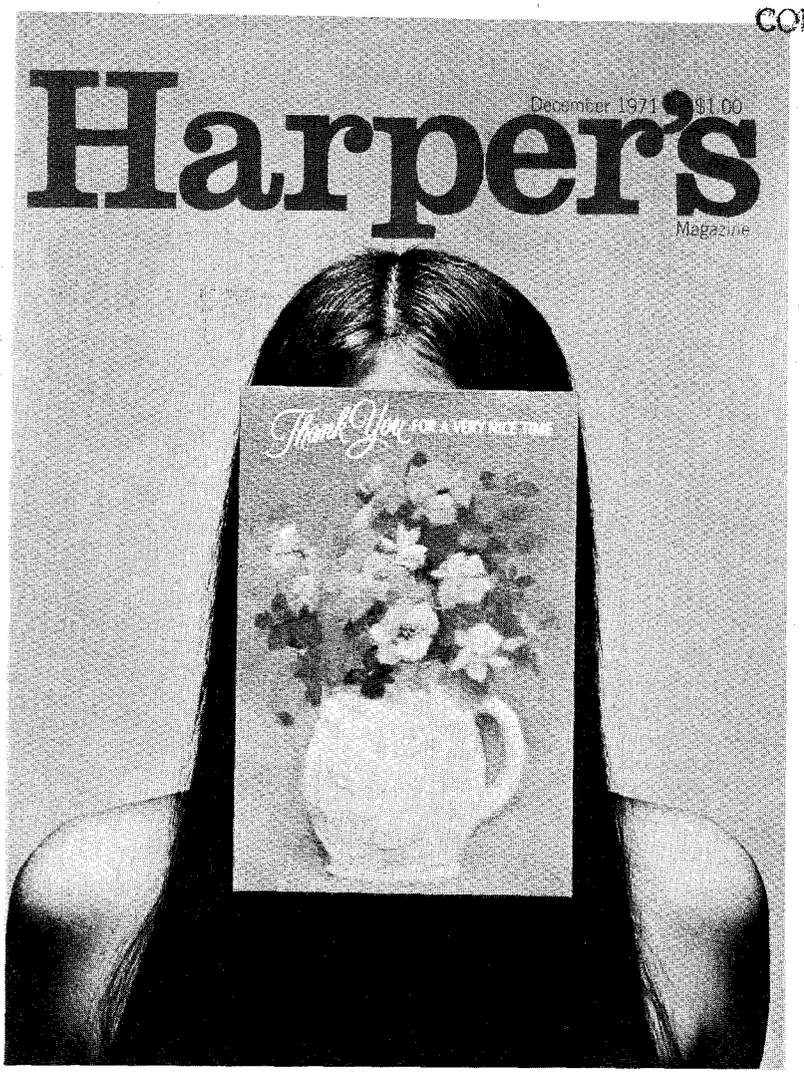

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